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**FACTORS OF RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE AND A
PATH TO PEACE: A STUDY OF THE
16TH CENTURY ANABAPTISTS**

by

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June 2015

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13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words)

Religiously motivated violence is and always will be a relevant topic. To address and effectively counter contemporary violent groups, it is important to investigate similar historic groups. This thesis attempts to answer the research question: "During the Radical Reformation, why did some Anabaptist groups accept the use of violence while others did not, and how did the movement evolve to pacifism?" To answer this question, this study utilizes a mixed methodology of case study analysis and social network analysis of Anabaptist leaders during the 16th century. This thesis argues that violent ideology is largely a function of three factors: charismatic leadership, isolation, and apocalypticism. The interaction of these factors led to the emergence of Anabaptist groups that embraced the use of violence. However, groups' internal characteristics can also lead them away from violence. In the case of the Anabaptists, social proximity assisted leaders with a counter-message to speak effectively to violent ultra-radical factions. The goal of this thesis is to identify characteristics of religious groups that may signal the potential for future violence, while also providing insight into which leaders may be capable of re-directing groups that have become violent.

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A STUDY OF THE 16TH CENTURY ANABAPTISTS**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
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ABSTRACT

Religiously motivated violence is and always will be a relevant topic. To address and effectively counter contemporary violent groups, it is important to investigate similar historic groups. This thesis attempts to answer the research question: "During the Radical Reformation, why did some Anabaptist groups accept the use of violence while others did not, and how did the movement evolve to pacifism?" To answer this question, this study utilizes a mixed methodology of case study analysis and social network analysis of Anabaptist leaders during the 16th century. This thesis argues that violent ideology is largely a function of three factors: charismatic leadership, isolation, and apocalypticism. The interaction of these factors led to the emergence of Anabaptist groups that embraced the use of violence. However, groups' internal characteristics can also lead them away from violence. In the case of the Anabaptists, social proximity assisted leaders with a counter-message to speak effectively to violent ultra-radical factions. The goal of this thesis is to identify characteristics of religious groups that may signal the potential for future violence, while also providing insight into which leaders may be capable of re-directing groups that have become violent.

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I.   INTRODUCTION TO RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE

Religiously motivated violence is and always will be a relevant topic, especially following the attacks of September 11, 2001, and the relatively recent emergence of high-profile extremist groups, such as Al Qaeda, Boko Haram, and Daesh (i.e., the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham [ISIS]). Violence, which can be motivated by a group's theology, presents unique and challenging situations to those attempting to counter its effects. These challenges include understanding the beliefs supporting violent action, understanding who within the groups are critical and influential, anticipating what the second and third-order effects will be following actions against the extremist groups, understanding how people are drawn to such groups, and determining how recruitment can be stifled.

Critical to countering violent extremism is understanding how these groups develop and how their religious beliefs, which may not be intrinsically violent, turn violent. This thesis theorizes that violent ideology is largely a function of three factors: charismatic leadership, isolation (social and/or geographic), and apocalypticism. The interaction of these factors can lead to the emergence of religious groups that embrace violent tactics. In addition, this thesis examines the internal characteristics of these violent groups that can lead them to change direction and move away from violence. In particular, this research examines how the close proximity of social position can assist leaders with a counter-message effectively speaking to violent ultra-radical factions.

Although the current conversation about religious violence is largely concerned with the spread of Islamic extremism, history includes many examples of other faiths that have tarnished histories of violence.[1] This thesis takes an in-depth look at one such case—the Münster Rebellion, which was part of the Anabaptist movement of the 16th century—to explore charismatic authority, social and geographic isolation, and apocalyptic beliefs. The rest of this chapter provides a brief introduction of the

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[1] See e.g., Heather Gregg, *The Path to Salvation: Religious Violence from the Crusades to Jihad* (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, 2014); Mohammed M. Hafez, *Why Muslims Rebel: Repression and Resistance in the Islamic World* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003); Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001).

Anabaptist movement of the 16th century, and the Münster Rebellionin particular, along with a discussion of what constitutes violence. It then discusses the mixed methodological research approach. In particular, it combines a case study approach with social network analysis (SNA), a statistical approach that allows researchers to examine the structure of groups and organizations. The chapter concludes with an overview of the thesis's remaining chapters, which explore all these topics in more depth.

A. EXAMINING RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE THROUGH THE LENS OF 16TH CENTURY ANABAPTISM

During the Protestant Reformation, a group of religious extremists known as the Anabaptists began to form, with differing opinions about how "true Christians" should practice Christianity. The Anabaptists trace their beginnings to Zurich in 1524, with a small group known as the Zwingli Radicals (who later became known as the Swiss Brethren).[2] The Zwingli Radicals originally followed the teachings of the reformer, Ulrich Zwingli; however, when they began to practice adult (i.e., "believer's") baptism, they were opposed by both the magisterial and religious authorities of the period, who quickly made the practice illegal and punishable by death.[3] At the time, infant baptism was not seen just as someone's inclusion into a community of faith, but it also marked them as a citizen of the state.[4] Thus, authorities viewed it as a form of rebellion. For this reason, they vigorously opposed it, and religious groups, such as the Anabaptists, did not adopt the practice lightly. Thus, the Anabaptists' formation in the 16th century can rightly be characterized as an extreme religious movement, and the fact that it was, at times, associated with violence, makes it an ideal case study for this thesis.

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[2] George Huntston Williams, *The Radical Reformation* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1975), 120. Internal debate has occurred among Anabaptist scholars as to what should be considered the origins of Anabaptism. The classic explanation of Zurich being the origin of Anabaptist tradition is largely due to the scholarly works of Harold S. Bender who attributed passivism as a characteristic of "Anabaptism Proper." This explanation has been argued against by scholars, such as James Stayer. For the simplicity of explanation, Bender's school of thought as to the origin of the sect is used in this thesis to frame the situation.

[3] Believers baptism is based on the idea that true followers of Jesus Christ need to follow the example set forth in the Bible and willingly accept baptism as a conscious outward commitment to the faith.

[4] Adrian Hastings, Alistair Mason, and Huge S. Pyer, *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 602.

Although the Anabaptists are primarily associated with pacifism, their foray into violence occurred in the Westphalian capital city of Münster in 1534. The incident, known as the Münster Rebellion, was perpetrated by a group of Anabaptists known as the Münsterites. For decades, authorities used this group, along with a handful of smaller, associated groups, as an example as to why Anabaptists were dangerous. This case is a useful example because the Münsterites' violent actions represent the furthest extreme of Anabaptist ideology, which helps to provide insight into how violence was incorporated into religious belief.

A complicating factor in understanding the Anabaptists during the Radical Reformation is making sense of the debates over the use of violence, as well as the types of violence being discussed. James Stayer's work, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, provides a useful typology for understanding religious violence. He explains that the use of force and ethical values consisted of four basic positions:[5]

- "The crusading standpoint is that of a persons in or out of power (if they are out of power they become revolutionary crusaders) who believe that force, the coercion of opponents, is an absolutely legitimate and effective means to full realization of their values in the world."[6]
- "The 'real political' approach, admits that no value emerges untarnished, no goal unperverted, when it is imposed by force. Under such circumstances moral strivings can only be realized by approximation, but it is better in the result to attempt to achieve one's values with whatever means are necessary than not to make the attempt."[7]
- "The 'apolitical moderates' affirm that force is necessary to the life of society but say that it is irrelevant to the achievement of the highest values. Out of a sense of duty to the commonweal they are willing to assume their share of the coercion necessary to cement their polities. Higher values cannot be achieved through force, but neither can they be achieved without the precondition of social order."[8]

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[5] James M. Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword* (Lawrence, KS: Coronado Press, 1979), 2.

[6] Ibid., 3.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid.

- "A more radical apoliticism denies that there can be any ethically neutral coercion among human beings. It asserts that to exercise force is to corrupt oneself and make impossible any achievement of true worth."[9]

Figure 1, which was developed by Tira Kuratsuka, visually depicts the aforementioned categorizations of violence.[10] Kuratsuka uses the broken line to explain the various positions of Anabaptist leaders as they span the spectrum between Martin Luther and Thomas Müntzer. Although this model clearly captures the violence found during the time of the Reformation, it also has utility for categorizing religiously motivated violence in general, even today.
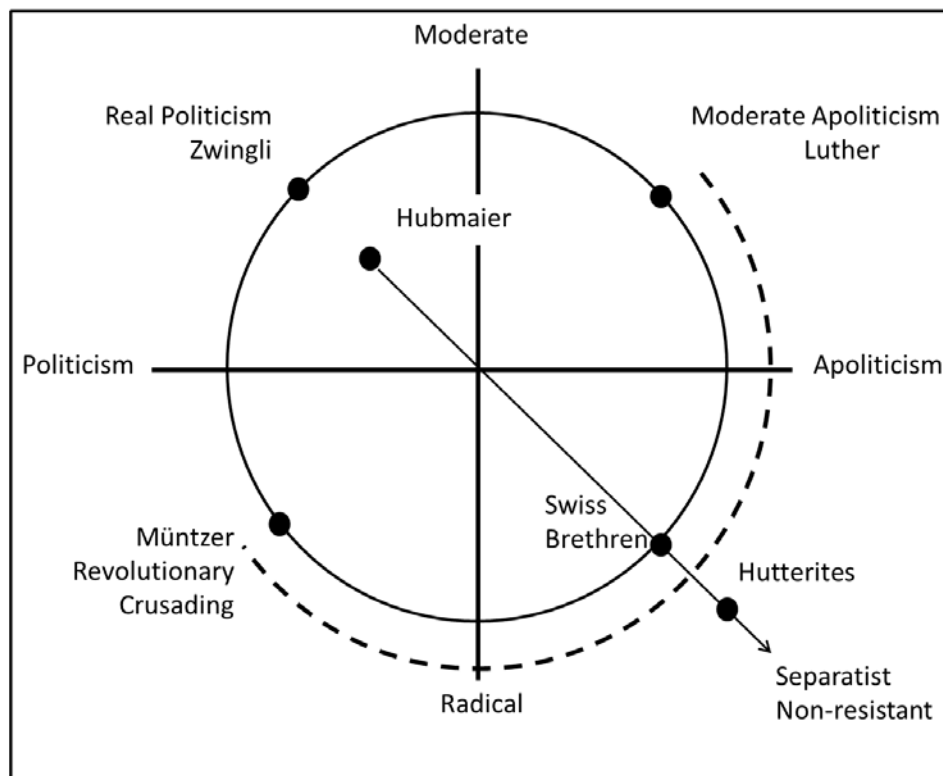

Figure 1.   Kuratsuka's Model of Religious Violence Utilizing Stayer's Categorizations[11]

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[9] Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 3.

[10] Ibid., xviii.

[11] Ibid.

B. THEORY AND METHODS

This thesis utilizes a mixed methodology to answer the research question: "During the Radical Reformation, why did some Anabaptist groups accept the use of violence while others did not, and how did the movement evolve to pacifism?" As noted previously, it combines a case study approach with social network analysis. A case study of the Anabaptism movement, specifically concerning Dutch Anabaptism, is the first means of establishing an understanding of the violent, yet peaceful, movement. The Münster Rebellion case is evaluated utilizing Sean Everton's model of radicalization, which provides a sociological explanation for the violence that occurred.[12]

The thesis then draws on SNA to evaluate the leadership network of 16th century Anabaptists. It provides a means for exploring how the leaders were connected, as well as how their positions within the network positively or negatively impacted their efforts. This analysis shows that the violence perpetrated by members of the Anabaptist movement was limited to an isolated cluster of leaders, who remained on the periphery of the overall network and maintained the aforementioned characteristics that were foreign to the overall movement. Importantly, however, it demonstrates how key influencers, located near the proximity of extremes, actually re-shaped the behavior of a movement.

C. OUTLINE FOR REMAINING CHAPTERS

Chapter II focuses on framing the Reformation and provides an expanded context of the Anabaptist movement drawn upon throughout the remaining chapters. Chapter III discusses the Anabaptist leadership and beliefs, specifically tied the violent historical event that occurred in Münster in the mid-1530s. Chapter IV develops a theory of radicalization, which is then tested through an examination of the Anabaptist leadership network using SNA techniques. Chapter V focuses on the post-Münster Dutch Anabaptist leadership responsible for re-directing the movement away from violence to identify the internal characteristics of groups that can lead them to deradicalize. Chapter VI, serves as a conclusion to this thesis and discusses the key takeaways that have been presented.

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[12] Sean F. Everton, "Religion and Radicalization" (lecture, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, December 4, 2014).

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II.   THE REFORMATION AND THE ORIGINS OF ANABAPTISM

This chapter seeks to frame the Protestant Reformation and the origins of Anabaptism to provide the context out of which the Münster Rebellion emerged so that it can be evaluated in Chapter III. Additionally, this chapter also seeks to explain the social location in which the Anabaptists resided during the 16th century, as well as define what the term Anabaptism means.

A.   THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION

1.   Historical Framing

To understand and appreciate the Radical Reformation, a brief history of medieval European Christianity and a general understanding of the Protestant Reformation is required. This is because the Reformation was essentially a response to the practices and governance of the Roman Catholic Church prior to the 16th century.[13] In turn, the Radical Reformation was a reaction to the Protestant Reformation, in that the radical leaders did not believe that the Protestant Reformation's reforms went far enough.

Roland Bainton provides an excellent framework from which to understand three distinct periods of medieval Christian history: dissemination, domination, and disintegration.[14] The dissemination period, the 5th through 11th centuries, saw the spread of Christianity through Europe and the conversion of pagans.[15] Due to Rome's inability to support missionaries, the Church had to become self-sufficient, and therefore, turned to farming; it was during this period of time that the Church gained control of a large amount of land throughout Europe.[16] Due to the importance of landownership, the Church was effectively part of the feudal system, and essentially, a political entity by the 8th century.[17] This landownership affected local politics in that parish priests and bishops

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[13] Roland H. Bainton, *The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), 5.

[14] Ibid., 6.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid., 7.

would at times retain secular titles and were known as "prince bishops;" thus, the religious and secular leaders were in some cases one and the same.[18]

The period of domination, the 12th and 13th centuries (also known as the Gregorian period), was effectively the point in time in which the Church attempted, successfully for a period of time, to Christianize the population of Europe and established a theocracy that presided over temporal rulers.[19] It was also during this period that the priesthood became celibate, and because of their exclusive right to bestow the sacraments, the overall status of the clergy was elevated to a level beyond that of the average person.[20]

The period of disintegration refers to the 14th and 15th centuries, which included the Avignon period.[21] This extremely complex period of time saw a reduction in Church power as a result of national ambition and war.[22] The Church's finances transitioned during this period, from "revenue in kind to revenue in coin," which resulted in the bankruptcy of the Church and its relocation to Avignon, France.[23] It was because of the depths of this financial crisis that the Church pursued various means for generating funds; in particular, its efforts to sell indulgences became big business.[24] The papacy was also plagued with problems (excessive spending, gambling, and a fascination with magnificence) during the Renaissance, which also reduced the image of the Church throughout Europe.[25] Additionally, during this time, the "Great Schism" took place and two popes were elected in different parts of Europe, a situation that would not be rectified until 1417.[26] As Bainton points out, "to hold the Reformation responsible for the

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[18] Bainton, *The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, 7.

[19] Ibid., 8.

[20] Ibid., 10.

[21] Ibid., 7–12.

[22] Ibid., 12.

[23] Also known as the Babylonian Captivity. Bainton, *The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, 12.

[24] Ibid., 13.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Reformation* (New York: Viking Penguin, 2004), 35.

destruction of the great papal theocracy of the thirteenth century is to forget the condition into which it had already fallen."[27]

Martin Luther is largely credited with the destruction of the papal theocracy. His actions in 1517 are typically associated with the origins of the Reformation. However, in both the 14th and 15th centuries, early leaders, such as John Wyclif, Jan Hus, and Erasmus, called on the Catholic Church to reform, which would impact both the Reformers and Radical Reformers of the 16th century.[28]

2.   Early Reformers: Wyclif, Hus, and Erasmus

As the Church was in the period of disintegration, the need for reform became obvious to many. This section briefly discusses three key early reformers whose influence played a role in both the Reformation and Radical Reformation: John Wyclif, Jan Hus, and Desiderius Erasmus.

Interestingly, although the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century took root first in mainland Europe, John Wyclif, an Englishman, was one of the early vocal critics of the Church. Wyclif was interested more in the "invisible realities" rather than the material realities of the world in which he lived.[29] He took issue with the material wealth and power of the Church and its self-appointed role as gate keeper to salvation. As he saw it, the Church was a mystical source of grace that should be available to all believers.[30] In 1384, he translated the New Testament into English, which made the Gospels available to the common people.[31] He was not without supporters, and even gained a degree of support within the nobility, likely because of their desire to see the Church lose its massive land holdings. However, his efforts were eventually suppressed

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[27] Bainton, *The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, 18.

[28] Erasmus remained a Catholic until his death, but did believe that the Catholic Church was in need of reform from within. Additionally Erasmus was relevant in both the 15th and 16th centuries, as he lived from the 1460s until 1536.

[29] MacCulloch, *The Reformation*, 35.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid.

and his Bible made illegal to own.[32] MacCulloch observes that Wyclif's failure was potentially the result of failing to receive the endorsement of the friars, whose position within society provided them access to the masses.[33] Additionally, MacCulloch draws attention to the fact that Wyclif did not utilize songs and hymns to propagate his message, which Luther would later successfully harness to their fullest extent.[34]

In a surprising twist of fate, Wyclif's works were taken to the city of Prague, where Jan Hus, Dean of Philosophy at the University of Prague, gained access to them.[35] Hus was already frustrated with the state of the Church and was inspired by what he read in Wyclif's writings.[36] Hus's message called for the reform of the Church, and it was widely received by the Czechs, in both academic, political, and village circles.[37] In 1414, Hus travelled to Konstanz to answer for his acts of rebellion. Although given a promise of safe conduct, he was tried for heresy and burned at the stake the following year.[38] Hus's execution enraged the Czechs who rebelled and fought a war that lasted several years and resulted in the development of the independent Hussite Church.[39] Although the Hussite Church eventually split, their beliefs regarding the priesthood, violence, and the Eucharist, would be revisited during the Reformation of the 16th century.[40] As discussed in Chapter III, Melchior Hofmann came to view Hus as a monumental figure who played a large role in Hofmann's understanding of the pending second coming of Christ.

Desiderius Erasmus was both an influential and complicated figure who emerged just prior to the Protestant Reformation, and remained active until his death in 1536. He advocated for the reform of the Church, yet never abandoned his Catholic faith. In 1516, he published his edition of the New Testament and commentary, which profoundly

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[32] MacCulloch, *The Reformation*, 35.

[33] Ibid., 36.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid., 37.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid., 38.

affected the Reformers.[41] Zwingli was particularly impressed with Erasmus, and had in fact, spent time with the humanist in Basel.[42] Erasmus's dislike of relics, saints, intolerance, clerical preference, and his desire to re-center the Church towards Christ, made his works both relevant and inspirational to Reformers and Radical Reformers alike.[43]

3.   The Protestant Reformers

The Protestant Reformation, according to many, began in 1517 when Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses on the doors of the church in Wittenberg. This fact is not inaccurate, but as this chapter has already discussed, the desire for reform had existed for over 100 years prior to Luther's emergence. Luther's, Zwingli's, and Calvin's grievances where not dissimilar to those that had been previously voiced. What is more difficult to quantify succinctly are their contributions. Each reformer rightfully deserves the volumes that have been written about them to portray not only their contributions accurately but also how their theologies differed. Importantly, they succeeded where pervious reformers, such as Wyclif and Hus, only attained limited success. Bainton argued that "the Reformation was above all else a revival of religion,"[44] which is a helpful way of looking at the Reformation because it cuts to the core of what each of the reformers' motivations were, regardless of their differences in theology and belief. Importantly for the purposes of this study, by advocating on behalf of "the priesthood of believers," the Protestant Reformation opened the theological floodgates, which allowed for the development of beliefs and leaders that could never have been anticipated.

B.   AN OVERVIEW OF RADICAL REFORMATION

The Protestant Reformation and the ensuing Radical Reformation within Europe in the 16th century was without question a confusing time period. It is difficult to gain adequately an understanding of how complex it was. However, a few important points

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[41] MacCulloch, *The Reformation*, 99.

[42] Ibid., 137.

[43] Ibid., 101–102.

[44] Bainton, *The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, 3.

bear mentioning. First, it is critical to understand that the ideas and conversation about Christendom were constantly evolving and changing at a very rapid pace. In other words, in Europe, at any given time and location, new ideas were being generated and hotly debated, which is especially true when examining the origins of the groups that would become known as the Anabaptists. Second, it must be understood that little consensus existed and varying degrees of agreement occurred amongst leaders on key aspects of the Christian faith and practice. Due to the level of complexity, it is easy to overly generalize what happened during this period of time. For the purposes of this study, the 65 years following the beginning of the Reformation (1517) is analyzed and discussed. During these years, the Anabaptists developed their radical theology and engaged in violence.

Figure 2 graphically depicts the major schools of thought of 16th century religious scholarship. A key aspect is the depiction of the Anabaptists, which shows the sub-divisions of this overarching school of thought. It helps draw attention to the fact that the term "Anabaptist" does not refer to a single group but rather to many groups, which may or may not have agreed with one another. (More than five groups existed. Figure 2 is simply designed to show that many belief systems were found within the term "Anabaptist").
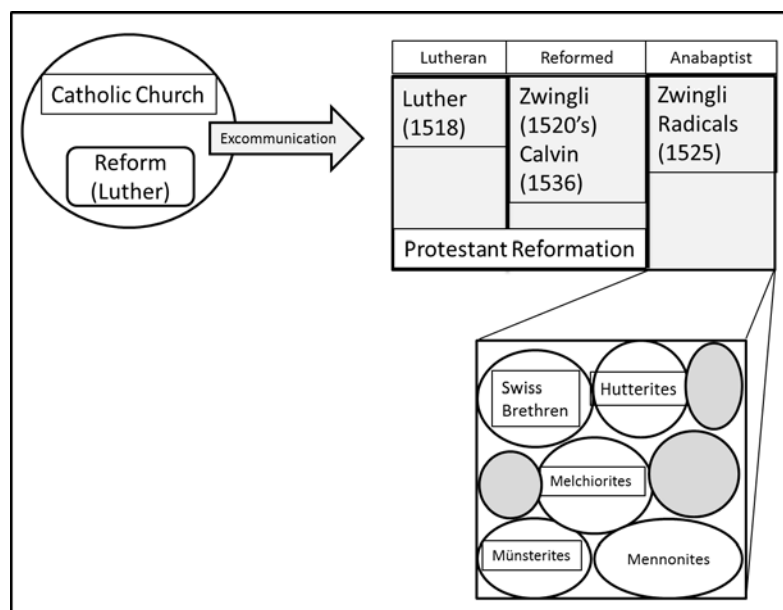
Figure 2.   The Process and Typology of Reform during the 16th Century

Although lines of division existed between major schools of thought, a large degree of cross-communication did occur between factions. Figure 3 captures known communication between some of the prominent leaders, both political and religious.[45] It shows that information and ideas moved through the network of leaders and were not necessarily inhibited by theological boundaries. Additionally, it is important to understand that "belief" was not strictly static, which is to say that the beliefs of leaders and members of groups evolved during the period, as did their relationships to one another. Thus, the Reformation and Radical Reformation were much more of a living, breathing, and changing period of time than many may have assumed it to have been.
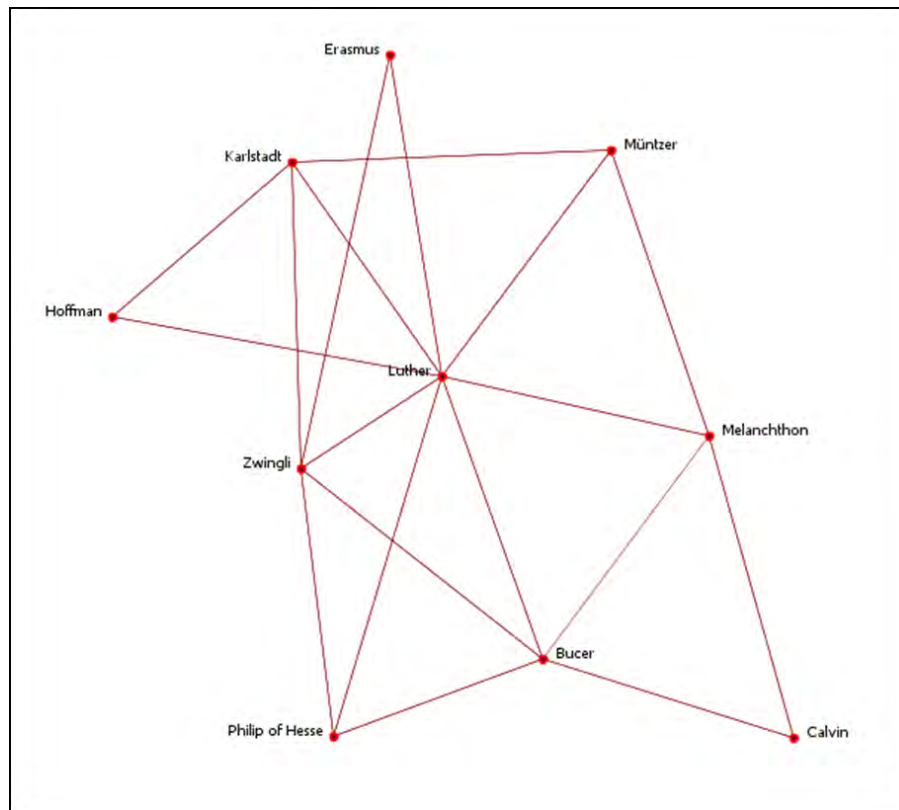
Figure 3.   Known Communication between Prominent Leaders
of the 16th Century

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[45] It should not be taken to mean that these ties were that of agreement or even personal interaction, as some were letters; additionally, it is not an all-inclusive visualization of the entire network, which is discussed in depth later.

In addition, it is helpful to depict, in general terms, how these various schools were viewed by their contemporaries in 16th century Europe. Figure 4 shows the range of belief relative to the time period. As can be seen, all "Anabaptist" groups would have been categorized in the radical and ultra-radical extremes of society, which is what explains the level of persecution the Anabaptists faced by both Catholic and Protestant authorities, including being beheaded, drowned, and burned at the stake. To understand why Anabaptism was viewed as a radical extreme movement, a brief description of their basic beliefs is needed.
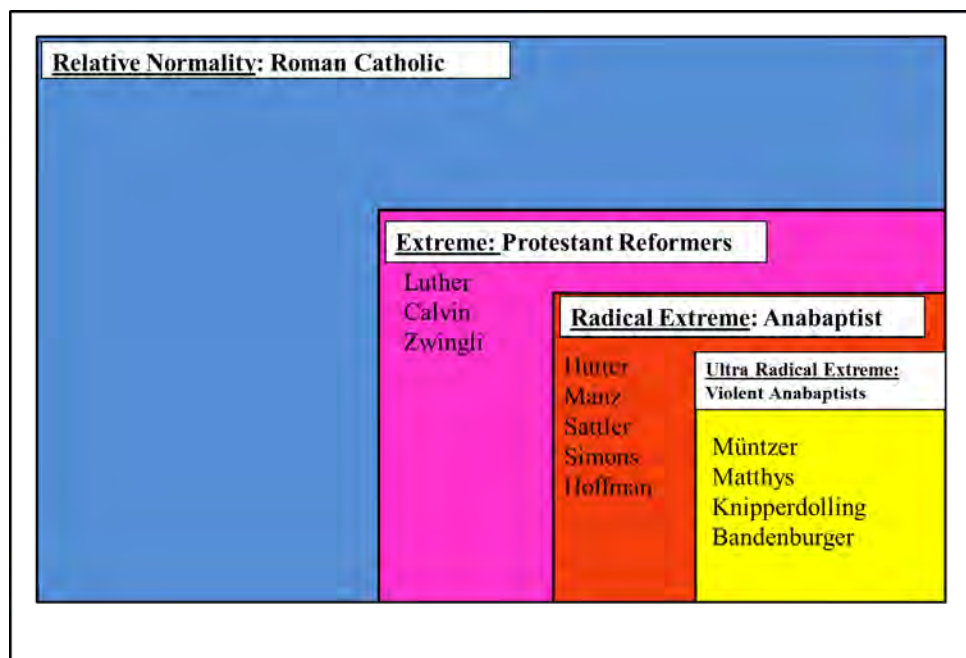
Figure 4.   16th Century European Range of Belief[46]

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[46] Thomas Müntzer appears in this diagram within the "Violent Anabaptist" categorization. Müntzer is a problematic historic figure in that although he did not practice believers' baptism, and is, therefore, not considered to be an Anabaptist. His inferred association with the movement (albeit postmortem to a large degree), as well as legacy, is closely tied with the beginnings of Anabaptism. It is, therefore, difficult, if not impossible, to discuss violence during the Radical Reformation without including Müntzer and the impact his actions had on his contemporaries.

THE ORIGINS, TERM, AND FRAMING OF ANABAPTISM

1.   Origins

The Anabaptist movement began in Zurich in 1524 with a small group known as the Zwingli Radicals (Swiss Brethren),[47] which originally followed the teachings of the reformer, Ulrich Zwingli. The Swiss Brethren believed that church reform had not gone far enough; thus, they wanted to start anew.[48] A key belief held by the Swiss Brethren was that infant baptism was unbiblical and that only the baptism of believers was valid. This point, which Zwingli opposed, was fiercely debated on January 10 and January 17, 1525 in front of the Zurich council.[49] The council upheld the practice of infant baptism and ordered the Swiss Brethren to baptize their children within eight days or be expelled from the city.[50]

It is important to note that baptism was more than just a theological debate; it granted citizenship and was a system of record keeping used by the state and church alike. Zurich's reaction to the Brethren's beliefs foreshadowed the reactions Anabaptists would encounter throughout Europe as their movement spread throughout the continent.

2.   Term

Due to the number of groups that existed and the range of beliefs held by individual groups, it is difficult to know which groups should and should not be considered "Anabaptist." Due to these disagreements over belief, as well as their behavior, James M. Stayer's classification of categorization becomes important.

> The Anabaptists I have investigated are necessarily united only by the outer sign that gave them their label: they are members of sects practicing baptism of believers and forming religious groups on that basis. Any other

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[47] Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 120. An internal debate occurred among Anabaptist scholars as to what should be considered the origins of Anabaptism. The classic explanation of Zurich being the origin of Anabaptist tradition is largely due to the scholarly works of Harold S. Bender who attributed passivism as a characteristic of "Anabaptism Proper". It has been argued against by scholars, such as James Stayer. For the simplicity of explanation, Bender's school of thought as to the origin of the sect is used in this article to frame the situation.

[48] Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 118–119.

[49] Ibid., 120.

[50] Ibid., 121.

general qualities of Anabaptism will have to be assigned on an *a posteriori,* rather than *a priori,* basis.[51]

Thus, any group that practiced "re-baptism" should be considered Anabaptist, regardless of the other beliefs they may or may not have held. The historian John Oyer notes that the term Anabaptist "was never a very useful word because of its lack of precision," and that his usage of the word refers only to groups during the Radical Reformation that believed in adult or believers' baptism.[52] For the purposes of this thesis, Oyer's definition is used to identify what was and was not an Anabaptist group.

Furthermore, the term "Anabaptist" itself, has changed in connotation over the centuries. During the 16th century, it was a pejorative, criminal term used by outsiders to categorize the various groups that practiced believers' baptism.[53] This distinction is important when investigating primary sources because it provides insight into the bias and negative perception held by authors and early historians. Additionally, it explains why much of the scholarship within this field of study, written during the mid-20th century, has a distinctly apologetic undertone. Today, however, the term does not conjure up negative associations and is simply used to help categorize groups.

3. Framing

Benton Johnson's reconceptualization of the polar nature of churches and sects is applicable to the understanding of Anabaptism in the 15th century. Johnson's basic argument is that the sect's polar location increases the social tension to the point that the sect members are persecuted by their society.[54] Rodney Stark and William Bainbridge argue that in addition to maintaining a high level of social tension, sects have a prior tie to another religious organization, and are in fact, founded by people who have left another religious group (it could be a church or sect) to "correct" the beliefs of the parent religious group.

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[51] Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 120.

[52] John S. Oyer, *Lutheran Reformers Against Anabaptists: Luther, Melanchton, and Menius, and the Anabaptists of Central Germany* (The Hague, The Netherlands: M. Nijhoff, 1964), 5.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Benton Johnson, "On Church and Sect," *American Sociological Review* 28, no. 4 (1963): 539–549.

Because sects are schismatic groups they present themselves to the world as something *old*. They left the parent body not to form a new faith but to *reestablish the old one*, from which the parent body had "drifted" (usually by becoming more churchlike). Sects claim to be the authentic, purged, refurbished version of the faith from which they split. Luther, for example, did not claim to be leading a new church but the true church cleansed of worldy [*sic*] encrustations.[55]

This distinction is helpful because it shows that the Protestant reformers themselves were sect leaders, and, from their sects, the Anabaptist groups are to be viewed as sects. Additionally, a sect should be viewed as a religious movement, which can be considered a social movement.[56] Stark and Bainbridge point out that "in a very general way it can be asserted that religious movements are organized groups wishing to become religious institutions."[57] In other words, sects "desire" to become churches or religious institutions in some form or fashion. With this framing in mind, it is easier to see how as the Protestant reformers became more "institution-like" (church-like), factions within the Reformation became disappointed with the movement's direction. As frustration mounted, sects formed, some of which were Anabaptist.

Anabaptists were also different from other religious groups based on their education (see Table 1). As Claus Clasen points out, "Although intellectuals such as Grebel and Manz had evolved the new doctrines, it was among common men that they quickly found their most numerous and enthusiastic apostles."[58] The population of educated people in Europe was smaller during the 16th century; however, the Anabaptism resonated with common people in much the same way as modern sectarian religions.[59]

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[55] Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge, "Of Churches, Sects, and Cults: Preliminary Concepts for a Theory of Religious Movements," *Jsciestudreli Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 18, no. 2 (1979): 117–131.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Taken from Claus Peter Clasen, *Anabaptism; A Social History, 1525–1618: Switzerland, Austria, Moravia, South and Central Germany* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1972), 309.

[59] It is interesting to see that in contemporary America, the divisions between modern churches, sects, and cults can, to some degree, also be observed in the levels of education of each group's members. This topic is explored by Rodney Stark in *The Rise of Christianity: A Sociologist Reconsiders History*, and is expressed in a table found on page 42.

Table 1.   Professions of Anabaptist Leaders in Switzerland, Germany, and Austria[60]

Profession	1525–1529	1530–1549	1550–1618
Intellectuals			
Clergymen	38	5	1
Schoolmasters	8	3	1
Clerks (*schreiber*)	6	0	0
Students	3	1	0
Others (artists, physicians, scholars, booktraders, "corrector")	4	3	2
Subtotal	**59**	**12**	**4**
Nonintellectuals			
Craftsmen	76	38	22
Peasants	19	12	1
Farm laborers, servants, shepherds	7	5	1
Tradesmen	2	0	1
Innkeepers	0	1	0
Others (collector of customs, gauger, horsemen, sexton)	4	0	0
Subtotal	**108**	**56**	**25**
Grand Total	**167**	**68**	**29**

Note: This table does not account for all Anabaptist leaders, since the professional background of a considerable number is unknown.

This chapter has established a general framework of understanding of the period leading up to the Reformation, the Reformation, and the Radical Reformation. Importantly, a basic understanding of the origins of the Anabaptists has been established from upon which the following chapters build. Chapter III presents the case of the Münster Rebellion, and discusses the early leadership of Dutch Anabaptism.

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[60] Taken from Claus Peter Clasen, *Anabaptism; A Social History, 1525–1618: Switzerland, Austria, Moravia, South and Central Germany*, 310.

III.   VIOLENT LEADERSHIP

This chapter focuses primarily on the early Dutch Anabaptist leaders and how their authority influenced violence in the 1530s. The role of leadership during the Radical Reformation was critical, and as this chapter highlights, became deadly when combined with isolation and apocalypticism.

Initially, the chapter focuses on the critical role of leaders during the early years of Anabaptism, and the role they played in spreading the system of belief. Next, it directs its attention to how Anabaptism was accepted by the Dutch, and provides a case study of the Münster Rebellion, as well as the other Dutch Anabaptist leaders associated with violence during the 16th century.

A.   THE IMPORTANCE OF ANABAPTIST LEADERSHIP

It is important to appreciate the scope Anabaptism throughout Europe in 1530 to understand the context of what would transpire in the Low Countries (the coastal region of North Western Europe).

Table 2, which was constructed by Claus-Peter Clasen, numerically captures the spread of Anabaptism through Europe between 1525 and 1628.[61] In particular, it is interesting to note the movement's "leaders," (i.e., the total number of active leaders) by time and place. The left column indicates the number of leaders by area and time period. However, if a leader moved from one community to another, but remained in the same area, he is counted more than once. By contrast, the italicized and underlined numbers in the right column count leaders only once by location and time period. Thus, from these two sets of numbers, it is possible to estimate the mobility of leaders by area and time. A column and row have been added to this table called "total mobility," the counts of which represent the overall mobility of leadership for both time periods, as well as regions. These counts do not represent the number of mobile leaders (because leaders could have been counted multiple times); rather, they serve as a score that provides an understanding

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[61] Clasen, *Anabaptism; A Social History, 1525–1618: Switzerland, Austria, Moravia, South and Central Germany*, 21.

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of the total mobility. It is interesting to note that the areas that had the highest number of converts, as well as communities affected, had higher levels of leader mobility, which suggests that leader mobility was critical to the development and spread of Anabaptism throughout Europe. Figures 5, 6, and 7 visually capture the values presented in Table 2. The correlation coefficient between total mobility and the number of converts is .592, whereas, the correlation coefficient between communities affected and the total mobility score is .519. Both coefficients indicate that a moderate relationship existed between total mobility, and the converted and affected communities.[62]

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[62] Correlation coefficients range from -1.00 to 1.00. A correlation of 1.00 indicates perfect positive correlation, while a correlation of -1.00 indicates perfect negative correlation. As a general rule, correlations greater than .20 (either positive or negative) are considered to be substantial, at least in the social sciences.

Table 2.   The Expansion of Anabaptism, 1525–1618[63]

Area	Anabaptist Converts				Communities affected*				Leaders **								Total Mobility***
	1525-1529	1530-1549	1550-1618	Total	1525-1529	1530-1549	1550-1618	1525-1618	1525-1529		1530-1549		1550-1618		Total		
Switzerland	588	478	481	1547	116	182	128	363	72	*71*	40	*27*	22	*21*	123	*119*	4
Rhine valley	549	336	1054	1939	29	72	246	294	26	*18*	36	*33*	43	*42*	103	*93*	10
Swabia	654	703	1575	2932	39	178	252	379	55	*41*	45	*41*	26	*26*	123	*108*	15
Tirol	455	1178	379	2012	74	150	97	212	35	*33*	39	*35*	3	*3*	73	*71*	2
Austria	422	99	16	537	35	24	7	55	33	*31*	1	*1*	3	*0*	34	*32*	2
Southeast	323	83	98	504	57	20	29	96	32	*22*	4	*3*	1	*1*	37	*26*	11
Franconia	466	157	31	654	107	46	14	151	32	*30*	7	*6*	0	*0*	39	*36*	3
Thuringia	112	202	21	335	35	65	8	94	8	*8*	14	*14*	1	*1*	23	*23*	0
Hesse	48	451	216	715	15	96	95	177	4	*3*	21	*14*	3	*3*	24	*20*	4
Total	3617	3687	3871	11175	507	833	876	1281	297	*257*	207	*174*	102	*97*	579	*528*	
Total Mobility ***									40		33		5		51		

*All communities affected by Anabaptists are counted within a given period of time. The same community might have had Anabaptists in two or all three periods. Therefore the total number of communities affected is smaller than the sum of communities added up horizontally.

** Leaders active in an area in a given period regardless of whether they also preached in other areas or in other periods. The italicized and underlined figures result when leaders are counted only once, at the time and in the area of their first appearance.

*** Total mobility has been added to this table for the purposes of this thesis. What total mobility shows is the mobility during periods of time, as well as within geographic areas. This number is the result of subtracting the number of leaders counted only once (underlined italics) from the total number of leaders. Importantly, this number does not indicate how many times a single leader is counted overall; therefore the number in total mobility does not represent the total number of leaders preaching in multiple locations. This number, therefore, indicates is how mobile the leadership was within periods of time and locations.

[63] Clasen, *Anabaptism; A Social History, 1525–1618: Switzerland, Austria, Moravia, South and Central Germany*, 21.
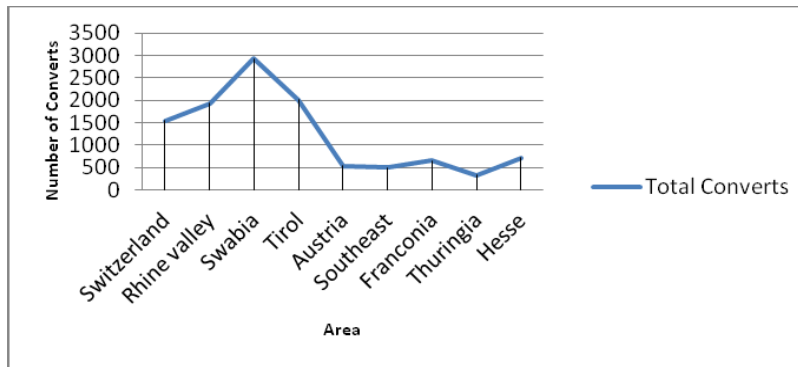
Figure 5.   Total Number of Converts[64]
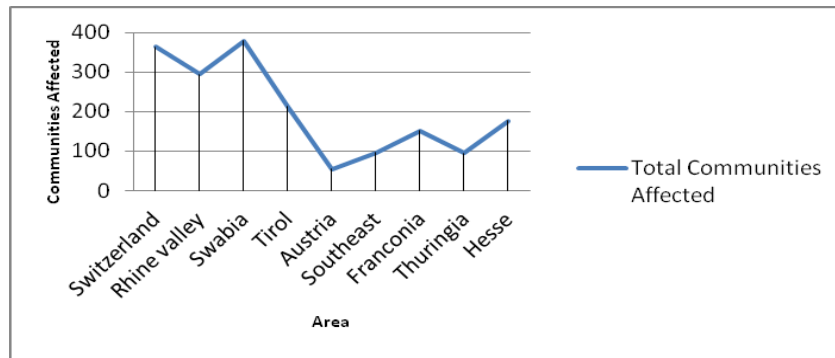

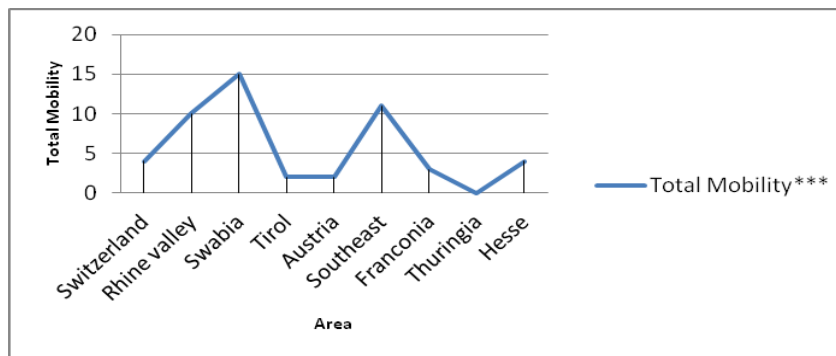Figure 6.   Total Communities Affected[65]

Figure 7.   Total Mobility[66]

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[64] Clasen, *Anabaptism; A Social History, 1525–1618: Switzerland, Austria, Moravia, South and Central Germany*, 21.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid.

The mobilization of leaders, ideas, and believers become an important aspect in the story of the Melchioites sect and the subsequent development of the Münsterites (as discussed in the following section). Additionally this mobilization also perpetuated the perceived threat Anabaptism presented to not only the Roman Catholic Church, but also to the developing Protestant churches. The following discussion describes key leaders in the movement.

B.   THE MELCHIOITE LEADERS

During the Radical Reformation, violence perpetrated by Anabaptists groups was much more an exception than a rule. However, one particular Anabaptist sect, the Münsterites, became very violent in the mid-1530s. In fact, this group was responsible for all the major incidences of violence associated with Anabaptism. Although the group derives its name from the city of Münster in Westphalia, it is more accurate to think of the group as a schismatic sect of the Melchioites (also referred to as Hofmannites, i.e., the followers of Melchior Hofmann), whose beginnings can be traced to 1530 in the Netherlands.[67]

1.   Melchior Hofmann

Melchior Hofmann was undoubtedly one of the most influential Anabaptist leaders in the Lower Rhine region, as well as in the Netherlands.[68] His influence is amazing considering that Hofmann was a lay minister (a furrier by trade) with no formal religious training.[69] Hofmann became a fervent evangelical Lutheran in 1522, and began his ministry almost immediately.[70] He found some level of acceptance within the Lutheran clergy; however, his lack of formal education precluded him from full acceptance.[71] In an effort to increase his legitimacy, Hofmann travelled to Wittenberg in

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[67] Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 335.

[68] Ibid., 259.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid.

1525 to gain Luther's personal support, which he received.[72] Hofmann then travelled extensively throughout Europe (Germany, Sweden, and Holstein) preaching Luther's message.[73] Although Hofmann's ministry was associated with Lutheranism, his message began to incorporate and rely heavily upon the apocalyptic and prophetic parts of the Bible.[74] For a variety of theological reasons, Hofmann began to fall out of favor with the Reformation leaders. In 1530, he travelled to Strasbourg, which at this time, was full of a wide array of religious ideas.[75] In Strasbourg, Hofmann first encountered various Anabaptists groups and was exposed to their teachings.[76] However, his fascination with the apocalypse, and his prophecies about the subject, were largely at odds with the Anabaptists he met in Strasbourg.[77]

In 1530, Hofmann created his own sect known as the Melchiorites. He was forced to flee Strasburg following a threat of arrest because of his request to the city council to allow the Anabaptists to have a designated church within Strasbourg.[78] He then travelled to Emden in East Frisia (Germany), where he first began baptizing adults by the hundreds. He also wrote a book in that same year, *The Ordinance of God*,[79] However, in 1531, after Hapsburg authorities executed nine of his followers, he suspended the practice of adult baptism and explained that in the "final days," true baptism would resume in the coming of the Spirit.[80] Hofmann's message was particularly well received in the Netherlands, particularly among the poor, due to long-standing social and religious tensions, which resulted in the widespread acceptance of his beliefs.[81]

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[72] Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 259.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 211.

[75] Hans-Jürgen Goertz, *The Anabaptists* (London, UK, New York: Routledge, 1996), 28.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Goertz, *The Anabaptists*, 29.

[79] Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 212.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Goertz, *The Anabaptists*, 29.

Melchior Hofmann's most significant belief was in the imminent second coming of Christ. He believed and preached that Strasbourg would become a "New Jerusalem" following a siege of the city in 1533, and that he and his 144,000 followers would meet Christ.[82] He taught that the divine glory consisted of three revelations: the first occurring during the time of the Apostles, the second during the time of the early reformer Jan Hus (1415), and the third during the time of the Reformation.[83] Additionally, Hofmann believed that he was, in fact, the prophet of God during the time of the Reformation, who was tasked with revealing the secrets of the second coming of Christ to the world.[84] He was also immensely interested in the biblical prophecies of Elijah and Enoch, and following the "prophecies" of his Strasbourg neighbors Leinhard and Ursula Jorst, he believed that he was Elijah.[85]

Interestingly, as Stayer points out, Hofmann's 1530 teachings were not technically millennialism because he believed the millennium had passed.[86] Hofmann also did not believe that violence could affect the timeline of "cosmic" events.[87] He believed that the use of the "sword" was apolitical and could be wielded by governments (to include Christian rulers) but that Christians could not use violence to advance the faith.[88] In 1533, Hofmann was arrested and sentenced to 10 years in prison, which left the Melchiorites void of leadership. Although Hofmann continued to write and prophesize while in captivity, his influence waned because of his failed predictions of the apocalypse.

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[82] Clasen, *Anabaptism; A Social History, 1525-1618: Switzerland, Austria, Moravia, South and Central Germany*, 119.

[83] Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 216.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Ibid., 224.

[86] Ibid., 216.

[87] Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 277.

[88] Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 215.

2.   Jan Matthys

Jan Matthys, a baker and follower of Hofmann's, declared that he was Enoch, the second prophet of the apocalypse, and assumed leadership of the Melchiorites.[89] Matthys re-instituted the practice of baptism because as he saw it the "period of grace" had come.[90] Matthys then dispatched apostles to go forward and baptize believers throughout the region.[91] Two of these, Bartholomeus Boeckbinder van Halle and Dirck Cuper, baptized Obbe Philips, who then baptized his brother Dirk Philips, Menno Simmons, and David Joris. These baptisms are significant because these latter three men would go on to become important leaders.[92] By the end of 1533, Matthys was clearly the leader of the Melchiorites, and was about to become the leader of the growing Anabaptist community in the city of Münster.

C.   LEADERSHIP AND INCIDENCE OF VIOLENCE

1.   The Münster Rebellion

During the Peasant Rebellion of 1525, demands were made to improve the economic, social, and religious conditions within the city of Münster, which resulted in an increase in tension between the city and the Catholic authorities.[93] At the time, the city was located within territory controlled by Prince Bishop Franz of Waldeck and was governed by an elected council. However, the guilds of the city had significant political power and authority. These merchants had been exposed to the teaching of the reformers (e.g., Luther) and had subsequently brought their ideas to the city.[94] By 1532, with the

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[89] Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 228.

[90] Klötzer points out that Blesdijik (an Anabaptist writer from the 16th century who followed both Menno Simons and David Joris), asserts that Rothmann's work "Confession of the Two Sacraments, Baptism and Communion" played a part in Matthys' decision to reinstitute baptism.

[91] Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 218.

[92] Paul Schowalter and Nanne van der Zijpp, "Obbe Philips (Ca. 1500–1568)," in *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia* (Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online, 1957).

[93] Ralf Klötzer, "The Melchiorites and Münster," in *A Companion to Anabaptism and Spiritualism, 1521–1700*, eds. John D. Roth and James M. Stayer (Leiden, The Netherlands, Boston: Brill, 2007), 224.

[94] Cornelius Krahn, *Dutch Anabaptism: Origin, Spread, Life and Thought*, 2nd ed. (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1981), 123.

support of the guilds, Bernard Knipperdolling (a local Reformation leader and supporter of Bernard Rothmann), had become a political leader in Münster.

The city had three religious enclaves: Catholics, Lutherans, and Sacramentarians.[95] Bernard Rothmann, a former Lutheran priest, who had travelled for several years throughout Germany, and had met many Reformation leaders, returned to Münster in 1532, and became the pastor of the Church of St. Lambert that officially brought the Reformation's ideology to the city.[96] The internal division within the city created a high level of tension between the religious groups, which resulted in Rothmann's removal from his position in 1533. However, shortly after his removal, Rothmann published a pamphlet, "Confession of the Two Sacraments, Baptism and Communion," which outlined what he believed baptism should mean to believers. Rothman also helped solidify Münster's acceptance of believer's baptism.[97] Although Rothmann was not officially the pastor of a church, he continued to preach outdoors and attract a following.

By 1534, Rothmann's influence within Münster was so great that he controlled every church, with the exception of St. Lambert's.[98] This transformation within Münster was organic; in other words, the reforms Rothmann ushered in were not brought to Münster by apostles. These events corresponded perfectly with what was happening in other parts of the region. McDaniel explains that as a result of the political environment, and the Anabaptists expanding control of the political situation within Münster, hundreds of Anabaptists moved to the city between 1532 and 1533, and an equal number of Catholics moved out. This migration occurred prior to the arrival of Matthys,[99] and

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[95] The Sacramentarians of Münster would later develop Anabaptist beliefs.

[96] Christian Neff et al., "Rothmann Bernhard (Ca. 1495–Ca. 1535)," in *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia* (Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online, 1989).

[97] Klötzer, "The Melchiorites and Münster," 228.

[98] Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 367.

[99] Charles A. McDaniel Jr., "Violent Yearnings for the Kingdom of God: Münster's Militant Anabaptism," in *Belief and Bloodshed: Religion and Violence Across Time and Tradition*, ed. James K. Wellman (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 66.

caused the city's demographics to shift so that Anabaptists gained a larger base of overall support within the city, much to the alarm of the prince bishop.

Several of Matthys's apostles arrived in Münster in January 1534, and promptly baptized several prominent leaders, including Rothmann.[100] These events worried not only the Lutherans and Catholics who remained in Münster, but also the Bishop, who began raising an army to deal with the problem.[101] Likewise, emissaries were sent from Münster to raise an army to defend the city.[102] Throughout this time period, as the tensions within the community of Münster increased, several flare-ups arose in which the followers of Rothmann came to his armed defense when threatened by competing groups within the city. As Klötzer points out, Matthys did not bring militancy to Münster; it was the population's willingness to defend itself that help to create a militant society.[103]

On February 10, 1534, in the midst of tensions within the community, a perihelion[104] appeared in the sky, which Münster Anabaptists interpreted as a sign that redemption was eminent, as was the destruction of the godless.[105] On February 23, elections were held and Knipperdolling was elected mayor, which signified a political victory for the Anabaptists in Münster.[106] Within days, those unwilling to be baptized were evicted from Münster.[107] While the political climate within the city was changing, the Prince-Bishop's forces began to mass outside of the city to curb the threat that the new Anabaptist political leaders presented.

Matthys, the self-proclaimed prophet, migrated to Münster in mid-February 1534, and the city became known as "New Jerusalem," where it was believed that Jesus would

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[100] Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 368.

[101] Ibid.

[102] Ibid., 369.

[103] Klötzer, "The Melchiorites and Münster," 233.

[104] Ibid., 231–232.

[105] A perihelion is also known as a "sun dog," a phenomena in which three suns appear to be in the sky, which is a result of ice crystals in the atmosphere.

[106] Klötzer, "The Melchiorites and Münster," 232.

[107] Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 369.

return to usher in the end of times.[108] Apostles from Münster were sent out to spread the "call" to come to "New Jerusalem." It especially resonated with the Dutch Anabaptists, who had been severely repressed. As many as 2,500 people migrated to the city, who replaced the Protestants and Catholics who had left.[109] Although Matthys was extremely influential and essentially in control of the city, his physical presence was short-lived. He was killed on April 5, 1534 (Easter Sunday) when he and 12 of his followers attempted to defeat the entire Prince-Bishop's army single handedly.[110]

Matthys's leadership role was then filled by Jan van Leyden, Matthys's longtime friend, who had actually moved to Münster before Matthys. Van Leyden, a self-appointed prophet as well, promptly pronounced himself king on Münster and instituted a policy of polygamy, which further departed from the original beliefs of the Anabaptists.[111] In fact, van Leyden married Matthys's widow and then took 16 more wives, which made marriage obligatory for the entire city.[112] Van Leyden stopped referring to the city as the "New Jerusalem" and began calling Münster "New Israel," believing that both he and the city were tasked with ushering in a new order and salvation to the world and punishing the enemies of God.[113]

Van Leyden's "Kingdom of Münster" was brutal in administering "justice" to its own people, which caused defections that would ultimately help usher in the defeat of the "kingdom."[114] Van Leyden actively participated in mass public executions of the citizens of Münster whom had offended the kingdom, or were considered a perceived threat that struck fear in both his own citizenry, as well as outsiders.[115] The Prince-Bishop's army gained control of the city on June 25, 1535, and killed many of its defenders and brutally

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[108] Cornelius Krahn, Nanne van der Zijpp, and James M. Stayer, "Münster Anabaptists," in *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia* (Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online, 1987).

[109] McDaniel, *Violent Yearnings for the Kingdom of God: Münster's Militant Anabaptism*, 66.

[110] Krahn, van der Zijpp, and Stayer, "Münster Anabaptists."

[111] Ibid.

[112] Klötzer, "The Melchiorites and Münster," 240.

[113] Ibid., 238–243.

[114] Ibid., 249.

[115] Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 256.

tortured and executed the remaining leaders of the rebellion. The Münster Rebellion was then upheld throughout Europe as an example of the dangers of Anabaptism, and it has been closely associated with the Anabaptist movement ever since.[116]

Interestingly, apocalyptic teachings were not present in Münster prior to 1534 when adult baptism was brought to the city.[117] Thus, the migration of Dutch Anabaptists to Münster helped introduce Hoffman's eschatological teachings, which combined with a willingness to defend the community, and assisted in the development of the violent Kingdom of Münster.

2. Jan Van Geel: The Old Cloister of Bolsward and Amsterdam's City Hall

During the siege of Münster, Jan van Leyden sent Jan van Geel (Geelen) not only to distribute copies of Rothmann's books throughout the Netherlands, but also to conduct attacks in an effort to shift focus away from Münster.[118] On March 29, 1535, 200 Anabaptists stormed and occupied the Old Cloister building in Bolsward, a city in the Netherlands.[119] The battle for the building represented a serious threat to the local authorities because, if it were successful, the possibility of a larger rebellion would be much greater.[120] In fact, in the city of Groningen in the Netherlands, a group of 70 Anabaptists formed to assist those in the Old Cloister.[121] After eight days of fighting, the building was re-captured and all its occupants were killed, with the exception of Geel, who managed to escape.[122] Following the failed attack on the Old Cloister, Geel then sought to build a force to take control of Amsterdam, which had a large Anabaptist community that had previously resisted magisterial authority. He realized that he was in a

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[116] Harold S. Bender, Robert Friedmann and Walter Klaassen, "Anabaptism," in *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia* (Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online, 1990).

[117] Klötzer, *The Melchiorites and Münster*, 230.

[118] Christian Neff and Nanne van der Zijpp, "Jan Van Geelen (D. 1535)," in *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia* (Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online, 1957).

[119] Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 272.

[120] Ibid.

[121] Ibid.

[122] Ibid. Some historians believe that Menno Simon's brother was killed during this event, as a follower of Geel.

difficult situation, and therefore, employed a clever deception plan to gain access to his target. He presented himself to the Habsburg authorities as an emissary sent to negotiate the surrender of Münster, which granted him safe passage and freedom of movement in Amsterdam.[123] There, he attempted to garner support covertly from the Anabaptist sects, as well as Protestant sympathizers within the city.[124] On May 10, 1535, Geel attacked and seized the city hall of Amsterdam with a force of about 60 men. However, additional support never materialized.[125] Geel, along with his remaining 40 followers, were all killed when the cities' militia retook the building on the morning of May 11.[126]

3.   Jan van Batenburger

The fall of Münster in 1535 did not mark the end of the Münsterite ideology. In fact, many of the Anabaptists with Münsterite sympathies remained in Westphalia. In 1535, a group of Anabaptist leaders approached Jan van Batenburg to convince him that he (Batenburg) was in fact chosen by God as David and that he would punish Babylon (Hapsburg-Burgundy) and the Whore of Babylon (the Holy See).[127] Batenburg quickly accepted the designation. He claimed that the "time of grace" had passed and that he was charged with punishing the godless.[128] This belief attracted some degree of support, which was the result of the anger felt by the Anabaptists in the Netherlands at the way their relatives were treated at Münster, as well as how the group was treated in the wake of the "kingdom's" fall.[129] Just as Matthys became the most recognized leader of the Melchiorites in the wake of Hofmann's arrest, Batenburg became the most prominent leader after the fall of Münster.[130]

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[123] Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*), 275.

[124] Ibid.

[125] Ibid., 276.

[126] Ibid.

[127] Ibid., 284.

[128] Goertz, *The Anabaptists*, 31.

[129] Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 285.

[130] Ibid., 291.

The Batenburgers continued to practice polygamy, as well as the communal ownership of goods, in much the same way as prescribed by Jan van Leyden.[131] Importantly, due to the suspension of the "time of grace," the Batenburgers suspended the practice of adult baptism.[132] Besides suspending the practice of baptism for theological reasons, they also suspended it for tactical reasons. The "outward sign" of adult baptism marked the group for persecution. Batenburg, however, wanted his group to function clandestinely, which in effect, turned the group into a hidden terrorist organization.[133] The clandestine nature of the Batenburgers was so important that members would attend Roman Catholic Mass to deceive their communities of their involvement with the group.[134]

In 1537, Batenburg planned to capture a city in Holland in an attempt to mimic the formation of the "Kingdom of Münster;" the undoubted goal of this plan was to succeed where the initial Münsterites had failed; that is, to usher in a heavenly city. No such attack manifested itself. However, after learning of the plot, the authorities began to persecute Anabaptists further in an attempt to reduce the likelihood of dealing with a second incident like the Münster Rebellion.[135] The group was assuredly violent, believing that it was justified in killing all who would not join them, including other Anabaptist groups, and that they could rob established churches to fund their activities.[136] Although the Batenburgers believed that their actions could not be confused with being criminal, they were.[137] Batenburg, however, was short lived as the group's leader. In 1537, he was arrested and executed.[138]

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[131] Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 382.

[132] Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 286.

[133] Ibid.

[134] Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 382.

[135] Sigrun Haude, *In the Shadow of "Savage Wolves": Anabaptist Münster and the German Reformation during the 1530s* (Boston [u.a.]: Humanities Press, 2000), 113.

[136] Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 382.

[137] Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 287.

[138] Ibid., 294.

Following Batenburg's execution, the group was led by Cornelis Appelman, who continued to rob and murder until he was caught and executed in 1545.[139] Interestingly, as Stayer points out, the group was more interested in criminal activity than in religion. Appelman's chief goal was to raise an army of mercenaries who could assist in "large-scale" raids of plunder.[140] Although the Batenburgers remained active for a few more years, the group had little to nothing to do with its initial religious motivations, and was in reality, a group of bandits.

Despite the fact that Batenburg was a well-known Anabaptist, support for him was far from unanimous, including that of former Münsterites. The period of time following the fall of Münster was confusing for Anabaptists. David Joris internally pushed to unify the group in the city of Bocholt, in Westphalia. Although this attempt failed (most likely because several key leaders did not attend), this event became important because Joris worked to reach common ground between the revolutionary and peaceful Anabaptist groups.[141]

Ultimately, Batenburg and his group's actions were a divisive force within the larger Anabaptist community. Heinrich Krechting (Münster's former chancellor) and his followers did not follow Batenburg because they believed that his actions and methodology were criminal, not spiritual.[142] At this point, the movement's discussion changed. Stayer points out that just before Batenburg's execution, he listed the names of Melchiorites, as well as other sects, in an attempt to assure their destruction.[143] They were the groups Batenburg saw as his largest competitors. David Joris, Obbe, and Dirk Philips were all at the top of the list, all of whom were leaders of pacifist sects.[144] As discussed in Chapter V, this access to the ultra-radical extreme caused the Anabaptist movement to change course and redirect itself away from violence.

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[139] Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 295.

[140] Ibid., 296.

[141] Ibid., 290.

[142] Ibid.

[143] Ibid., 294.

[144] Ibid.

D. CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed the importance leadership played with regard to the overall development of Anabaptism. Additionally, it has looked at Dutch Anabaptism, and in particular, the development of the Melchioite sect and the leaders who were part of its early history. In the following chapter, the three contributing factors of religiously motivated violence (charismatic leadership, isolation, and apocalypticism), are used to evaluate this case further.

IV. THEORY AND SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS

The previous chapters framed the Protestant Reformation, Anabaptism, as well as the major episodes of violence perpetrated by the Anabaptists. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first argues that violent religious ideology is a largely a function of three factors: charismatic leadership, isolation, and apocalypticism. It explores existing scholarship pertaining to these three factors and delineates how each relates to the Münster Rebellion. The second draws on SNA methods to evaluate the Anabaptist leadership network to explain the radicalization of the Münsterites further.

A. THEORY

1. Charismatic Leadership

Charismatic leadership according to Max Weber is "virtue of which [an individual] is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed, superhuman or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities."[145] Weber also discusses the perceived divine nature of these qualities, but more importantly, at least for the purposes of this thesis, he notes that the legitimacy of charismatic leaders do not depend on the perspective of outsiders but rather on those who fall within that leader's purview.[146] Its followers therefore see this type of leadership as divinely sanctioned. The leader is seen as being connected to a deity in a way that is beyond the capabilities of the common person.[147] This connection adds not only to the internal legitimacy of leaders within the group, but it also elevates the authority from which they draw their supremacy. The leaders, as well as the followers, believe that their position within society is "chosen" or "elect," which legitimizes the actions taken both internally within the group, as well as those taken against outsiders. James Rinehart provides a succinct overview of Weber's

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[145] Max Weber, Talcott Parsons, and A. M. Henderson, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (New York: Free Press, 1964), 358.

[146] Ibid.

[147] Ibid.

arguments on the preconditions of genuine prophetic leadership that are useful in understanding the case of the early Dutch Anabaptists:

> Weber asserts that charisma is associated with times of "distress" and "extraordinary" situations and identifies two essential preconditions for genuine prophetic leadership. First, "the leader must challenge the established normative order by proclaiming a break with that order and by declaring such a break to be morally legitimate." Second, and equally important, "it is recognition on the part of those subject to authority which is decisive for the validity of charisma." This recognition is granted, often in an unquestioning and rather blind manner, and "guaranteed by what is held to be a 'sign' or proof, originally always with miracle." Thus, charisma is a self-defined condition that, nonetheless, draws its powers and legitimacy not from internal sources from within the leader, but from the needs of the people themselves.[148]

Clearly, the leaders discussed in the previous chapter (Hofmann, van Leyden, Matthys, and Batenburg) all believed that they were divinely chosen and convincingly inspired others to believe in their authority as well.

A potential problem with charismatic leadership occurs during the transition to a new leader following the departure of the initial charismatic leader. Eric Schoon and Joseph West note that the succession of charismatic authority must include three critical elements.[149]

- It must represent some facet of the original charismatic authority.
- It must be recognizable to the membership of the charismatic organization.
- It must have the power to give meaning and shape goals in a way that will guide the habitual responses of actors as they confront problem situations.[150]

Looking at the initial transition of authority from Hofmann to Matthys, these three elements are observable. Interestingly, Hofmann was imprisoned during the transition; Matthys, in effect, forced the transfer of authority, which was aided by the social situation developing in Münster.

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[148] James F. Rinehart, *Revolution and the Millennium: China, Mexico and Iran* (Westport, CT: London: Praeger, 1997), 119.

[149] Eric Schoon and A. Joseph West, "From Prophecy to Practice: Mutual Selection Cycles in the Routinization of Charismatic Authority," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* (forthcoming): 37.

[150] Ibid.

2.   Isolation

The isolation of religious groups presents a potentially dangerous situation that can result in violence. Understanding how and why groups isolate is important in both understanding both isolated groups themselves and potentially preventing isolated groups from becoming violent.

Minority religious groups, in particular, groups that hold views counter to that of the majority, are susceptible to being denied liberties because of the inconvenience these groups place upon the societies in which they are found.[151] Due to their views, minority groups are typically differentiated from the majority for a variety of reasons that may include different religious practices (e.g., adult baptism), beliefs, faiths, life styles, or cultures. These groups are often denied the liberties afforded to other groups because of the perceived or real threat they pose to their governments or societies.[152] Thus, the existence of minority religious groups can create tension within the societies in which they are found; likewise, they are sometimes the recipients of tension (persecution, repression) in response to their existence.

Tension with the surrounding society, as Sean Everton argues, is one of the factors that can drive religious networks to isolate themselves.[153] The persecuted individuals band together because their beliefs are common amongst the group. Isolation, however, can be spiritual and or physical. In the case of the Batenburgers, members were encouraged to continue to attend Catholic mass, so as not to draw attention to their actual beliefs. Therefore, they maintained their status within the society although they were (anonymously) spiritually isolated.[154] The Anabaptist rise to political control of Münster, and the migration of fellow believers to the city, presents a classic example of physical isolation that resulted from tension with European society. Moreover, once they gained control of the city, the Münsterites became increasingly isolated both because of their

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[151] Brian J. Grim and Roger Finke, *The Price of Freedom Denied: Religious Persecution and Conflict in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 60.

[152] Ibid., 46.

[153] Everton, "Religion and Radicalization."

[154] Williams, *The Radical Reformation*.

expulsion of other religious groups and the siege imposed by the Price-Bishop. Had Anabaptists beliefs been tolerated throughout the region, the "draw" to Münster would have been far less than what it was. However, due to persecution, thousands of Anabaptists migrated to the city to receive the religious freedoms they were being denied. In effect, isolation provides a repressed or persecuted group with security, and to the extent its isolation is allowed to persist, freedom.

Isolation also has a profound effect on the inner dynamics of the group itself. Stark and Bainbridge, in their study on a satanic cult in the 1970s, observed that once an individual joined the group, the amount of time spent with outsiders decreased, while the time spent with group members occupied the majority of their time.[155] Once external ties were severed, the cult then physically isolated itself and further developed systems of beliefs.[156] Therefore, by cutting or limited outside ties, inner group ties are strengthened to the point at which they are the only ties that members maintain. By limiting access to "outside" information, the likelihood of radicalization increases. Cass Sunstein's research on group polarization identified that the more effective the ties between group members, the likelihood of decency within the group is reduced.[157] Therefore, extreme beliefs within the isolated group are less likely to be countered.

Isolation is also a potential indicator of violence. The social tensions that lead groups to isolate also lead minority religious groups to become violent. Brian Grim and Roger Finke note that social tension and government restrictions on religion actually result in the increase of violence and persecution.[158] They found that when society or the government persecuted religious groups, violence increased dramatically; whereas, when

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[155] Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge, "Networks of Faith: Interpersonal Bonds and Recruitment to Cults and Sects," *American Journal of Sociology* 85, no. 6 (1980): 1380.

[156] Ibid.

[157] Cass R. Sunstein, "The Law of Group Polarization," *Journal of Political Philosophy* 10, no. 2 (2002): 180–181.

[158] Grim and Finke, *The Price of Freedom Denied: Religious Persecution and Conflict in the Twenty-First Century*, 10.

governments and societies allowed religious freedoms to exist, minority religious groups experienced far less persecution and were much less violent.[159]

Everton's model of radicalization (Figure 8) explains the process of isolation and its relationship to violence.[160] Distinctive religious groups that encounter coercion and/or tension because of their beliefs tend to isolate themselves from society.[161] Once isolated, the strong internal ties of the network tend to reinforce common beliefs reducing differing opinions, which results in the radicalization of the group.[162] Everton's model also depicts divine sanction as a contributing factor in the emergence of violence within isolated religious groups.[163] It functions as a catalyst to violence because it justifies the internal and external actions of the group. When divine sanction (justification) for violence is introduced by a charismatic authority within an isolated group, it is less likely to be met with dissent due to the lack of other information within the closed network. Divine sanction is particularly dangerous when the justification is tied to apocalypticism, as is discussed in the following section.

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[159] Grim and Finke, *The Price of Freedom Denied: Religious Persecution and Conflict in the Twenty-First Century*, 212–213.

[160] Everton, "Religion and Radicalization."

[161] Ibid.

[162] Ibid.

[163] Ibid.
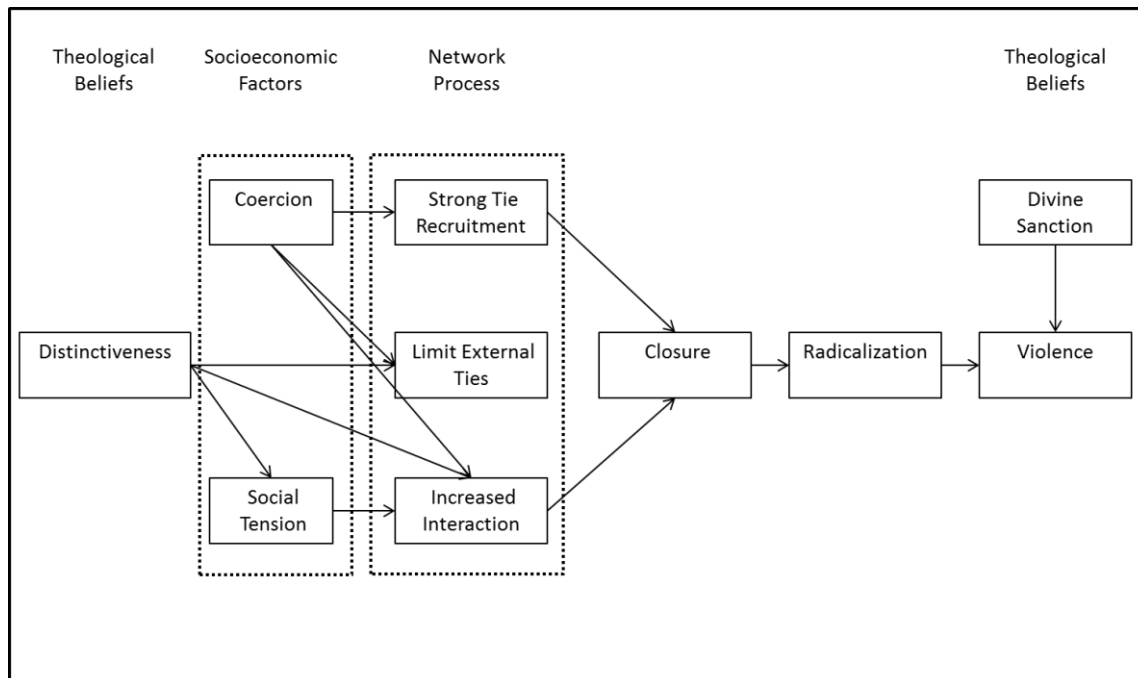
Figure 8.   Everton's Model of Racialization[164]

3.   Apocalypticism

Apocalypticism in its most basic form is the belief that the end of the world is imminent.[165] Bromley observes that "apocalypticism is a radical form of organization that is most likely to be elected by groups in social locations experiencing crisis."[166] This is clearly true with regards to the Hofmann-influenced Dutch Anabaptists of the 16th century. Apocalypticism can also be secular in nature. In other words, the social environment outside of religious views can become so threatened that it may seem as though the world is on the verge of destruction. Bromley also notes how apocalyptic groups actively search for catastrophic events from within their environment that empirically validate the impending end of existence.[167] Two events of the Münster Rebellion display this belief. One, the declaration by Hofmann, and then later, van

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[164] Everton, "Religion and Radicalization."

[165] David G. Bromley, "Constructing Apocalypticism," in *Milennium, Messiahs, and Mayhem: Contemporary Apocalyptic Movements*, ed. Thomas Robbins and Susan J. Palmer (New York: Psychology Press, 1997), 31.

[166] Ibid., 34.

[167] Ibid., 36.

Leyden, as being the prophets of the apocalypse mentioned in the Bible (Enoch and Elijah) signaled to their followers that the world would soon end. The second, the Anabaptists political seizure of Münster, appeared to legitimize Hofmann's prediction of the creation of a "new Jerusalem" that would precede the second coming of Christ.[168] Additionally, prophetic apocalypticism accentuates in-group interaction and reduces access to outsiders; in fact, the closer the apocalypse appears to be, the more difficult it is to gain access to the group.[169]

Apocalypticism is concerning because it further removes members from the society in which they live. Thus, if groups accept apocalypticism as a response to crisis, it is fair then to assume that a level of tension between the group and society already exists, which is therefore increased with the acceptance of an apocalyptic message. Additionally, the role that the apocalyptic group plays in its predicted world-ending events is also something that should be considered. For example, the Münsterites believed "Münster would be the beginning of the millennial Kingdom of Christ and that its inhabitants were God's chosen instruments for the punishment of the world."[170] The acceptance of an active human role working in conjunction with perceived cosmic events is an additional reason for concern.

4.   Combination of Three Factors

The combination of the three factors discussed in this section creates the potential for religious groups to act violently. Each increases the tension between a group and the wider society, and each is a reaction to the parent society. Groups like the Münsterites that believe that their leaders have supernatural connections with the divine, that isolate themselves from their societies, and believe that the end of the world is near,[171] are more likely to become violent than those that do not. The increase in social tension and

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[168] Additionally, success in battle and the appearance of three suns aided the Münsterites in affirming their beliefs. The parallel between this and Islamic State's recent declaration of the reestablishment of the caliphate are striking.

[169] Bromley, "Constructing Apocalypticism," 39.

[170] Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 264.

[171] Particularly, it is the case when apocalyptic beliefs require human participation in bringing about the end times.

persecution for each one of these factors work to isolate the group initially from society, then solidify group cohesion, while reducing outside ties, reducing the amount of dissent within the group. Additionally, social reactions as a result of these tensions can at times serve as proof of the truth of their beliefs.

Figure 9 utilizes Everton's model and outlines the corresponding events of the Münster Rebellion. The top section shows how charismatic leadership, isolation, and apocalypticism contribute throughout Everton's process of radicalization. As displayed in the model, charismatic leadership is a factor that can be interjected throughout the process. During the radicalization of the Münsterites, charismatic authority was transferred (willingly or not) from Hofmann to other leaders as the group further radicalized. Social isolation occurred as the Anabaptists were persecuted for their beliefs, but it then became physical once Münster was within the political control of the Münsterites. Divine sanction came in two forms: The charismatic authority of leaders and the apocalyptic predictions of Christ's impending return. These sanctions justified the actions of the group and inspired the Münsterites to adopt violent beliefs that they believed were being directed by God.
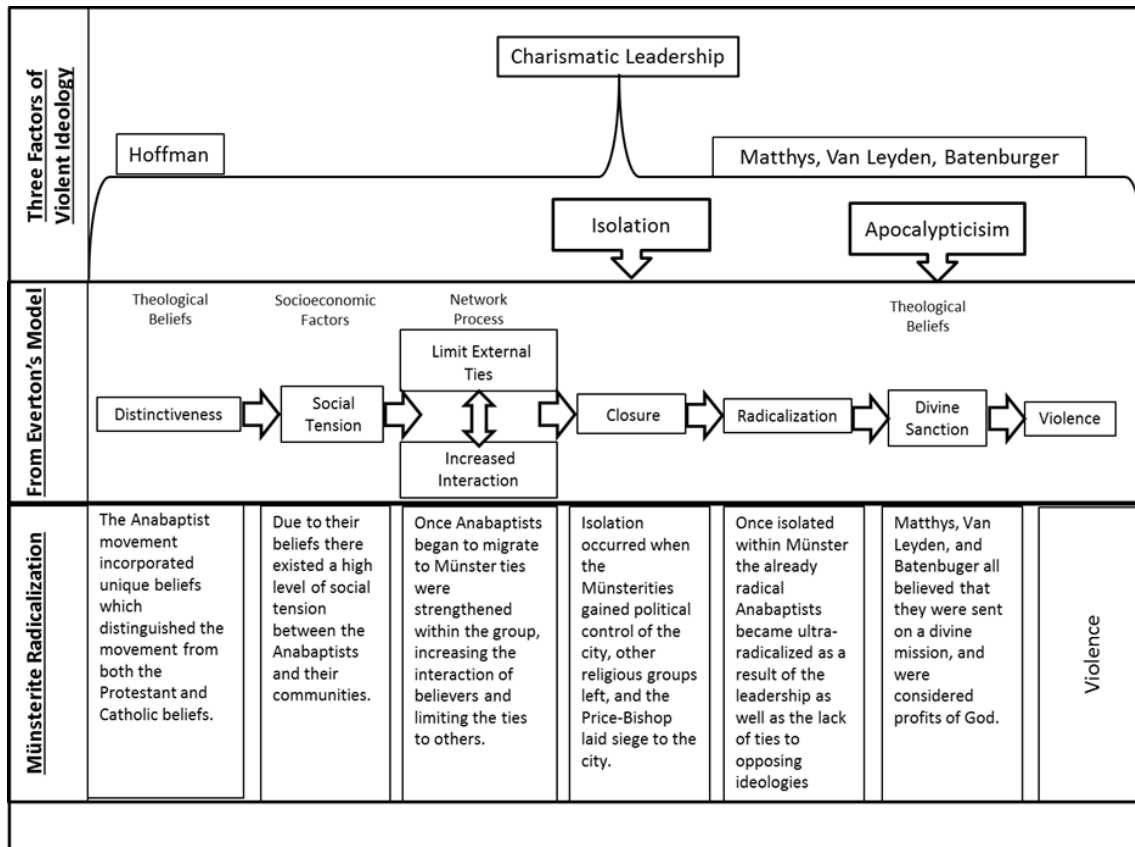
Figure 9.   The Interaction of Three Factors of Religious Violence, Everton's
Model and the Münster Rebellion

B.   SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS

This section utilizes social network analysis to describe the social isolation of the Münsterites further, as well as provide a visual context to the Radical Reformation. Additionally, it highlights the limited acceptance of violence by the Anabaptists, particularly the "crusading" belief in violence described in Chapter I.

1.   Data

The social network data used in this research builds upon the data collected by Matthews, Edmonds, Wildman, and Nunn.[172] Drawing on additional sources, the data has

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[172] Luke J. Matthews et al., "Cultural Inheritance or Cultural Diffusion of Religious Violence? A Quantitative Case Study of the Radical Reformation," *Religion, Brain & Behavior* 3, no. 1 (2013): 3–15. This data is available for download at the ARDA website: http://www.thearda.com/.

been expanded from 49 leaders to 67 leaders.[173] This expansion is key to this study in that it displays more of the connective tissue of the network, as well as including key and influential individuals initially not accounted for (e.g., Menno Simons). By focusing on these individuals a greater understanding of the development of the overall network has been established. Of the 67 leaders, 55 are categorized as Anabaptists. Therefore, the network includes leaders (both Protestant and Anabaptist) who were significant figures during the mid-16th century. Significance is defined as having a recordable impact on the history and development of the Protestant Reformation, as well as the Radical Reformation, and that these leaders had documented ties.[174]

For the construction of this data set, ties between leaders represent documented physical interaction between the leaders. In many cases, leaders were in the same city at the same point in time. However, it is not enough information to assert that the leaders had met. In other cases, historians have long made assumptions as to if leaders had met, it also is not enough information to assert a tie for the purposes of the data being represented in this thesis. The goal in constructing this data set was to show as accurately as possible which leaders had met one another at some point in time. To determine if these leaders had met, the scholarly works of Krahn, Williams, Stayer, Clasen, Bender, Klötzer, and others were examined. It is also important to note that the ties represented do no indicate agreement or disagreement between nodes. Simply, these ties indicate that the two nodes met one another at some point in time or were in conversation with one another. In many cases, the leaders worked together, or went to school together. In other cases, they opposed one another in debates and were at total odds with one another. The importance of looking at ties, regardless of sentiment, is that this data set provides a better understanding as to who had access to different ideas throughout the overall network, and who was isolated.

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[173] The additional sources used to expand the network include the Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online: www.gameo.org; Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*; Williams, *The Radical Reformation*; Krahn, van der Zijpp, and Stayer, "Münster Anabaptists."

[174] It is not to say that other leaders did not have an impact on both movements. The leaders included in this data set were major figures in the movement, or were connected to major figures, i.e., apostles who had an impact on expanding the overall network.

2. Analysis

Figure 10 presents the overall network. Nodes (ellipses) represent individuals, and lines represent ties. Melchior Hofmann is highlighted with a red circle, Menno Simons (see Chapter V) is highlighted with a blue one, and the entire Melchiorite belief network is contained within the orange circle. The separation of the Melchiorites from the rest of the network can be clearly seen.
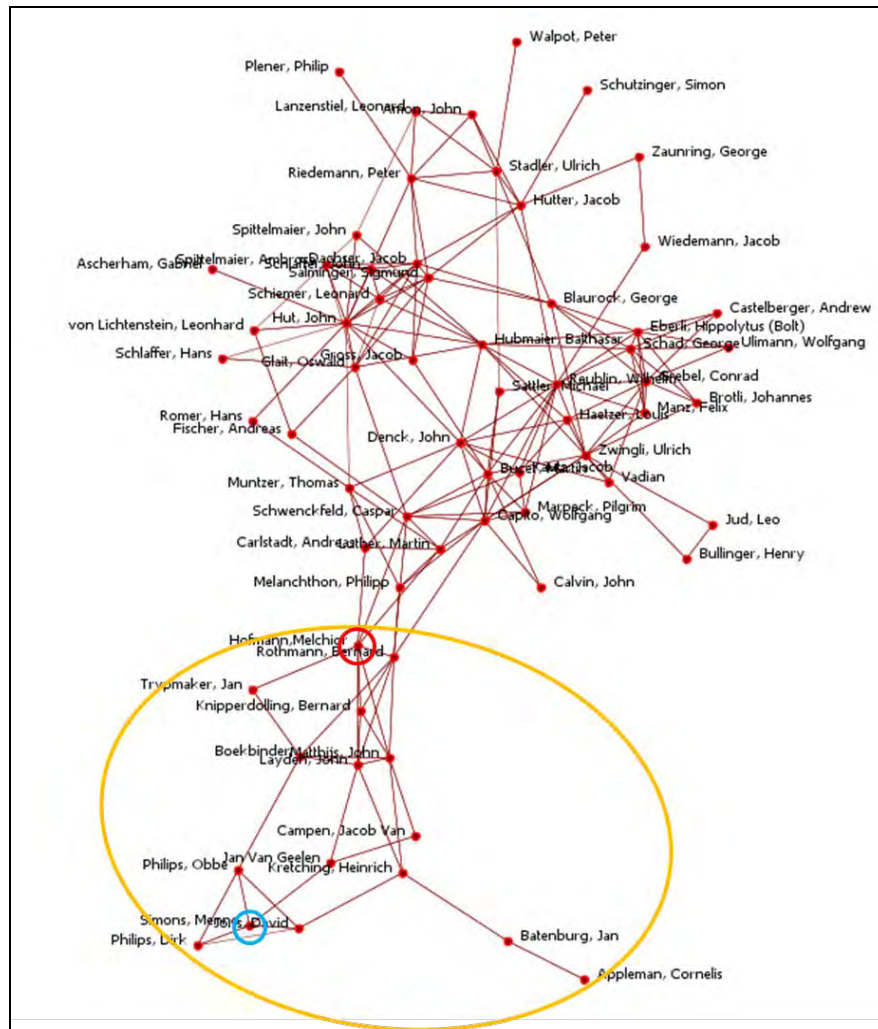

Figure 10.   Overall 16th Century Leadership Network[175]

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[175] After Matthews et al., "Cultural Inheritance or Cultural Diffusion of Religious Violence? A Quantitative Case Study of the Radical Reformation."

The Melchiorite subgroup can also be identified using the Clauset, Newman, Moore grouping algorithm,[176] which detects subgroups that have "more ties within and fewer ties between [other] groups than would be expected in a random graph of the same size with the same number of ties."[177] Figure 11 presents the results after running the algorithm on the overall network. The subgroups are identified by node color. As can be seen, based solely on the pattern of ties, the algorithm identified the Melchiorites (highlighted in blue) as a distinct subgroup within the overall leadership network.
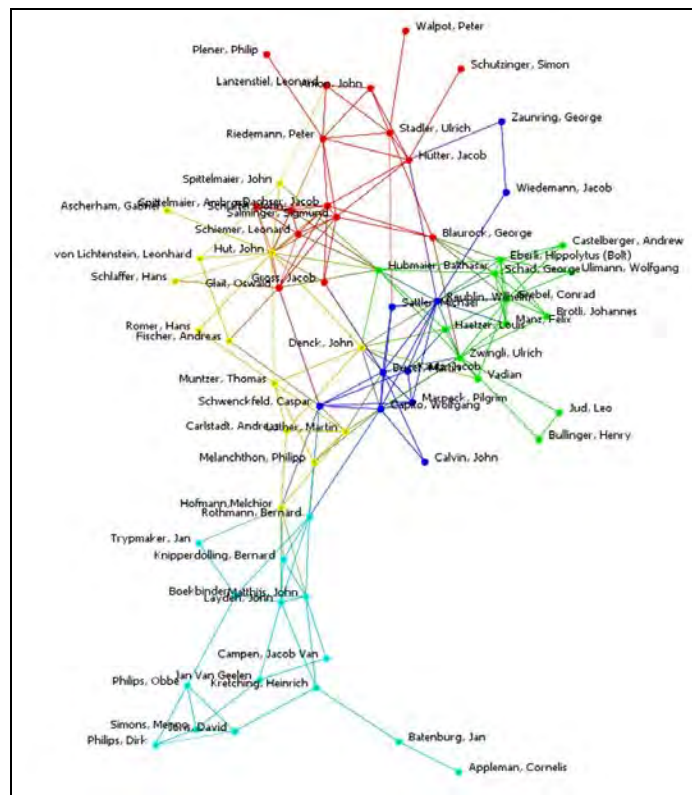
Figure 11.   Clauset, Newman, Moore Grouping of the Overall 16th Century
Leadership Network[178]

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[176] Aaron Clauset, Mark E. J. Newman, and Christopher Moore, "Finding Community Structure in very Large Networks," *Physical Review. E, Statistical, Nonlinear, and Soft Matter Physics* 70, no. 6 (2004): 66–111.

[177] Sean F. Everton, *Disrupting Dark Networks* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 194–195. For additional information on Newman groups, see section 6.5 in *Disrupting Dark Networks.*

[178] After Matthews et al., "Cultural Inheritance or Cultural Diffusion of Religious Violence? A Quantitative Case Study of the Radical Reformation."

As both Figures 10 and 11 indicate, the Melchiorite sub-group was isolated within the overall network of leaders and had relatively few connections to other groups. In effect, Hofmann and Rothman were the only ones who had ties outside the group.

Further analysis of the data indicates a strong correlation between apocalyptic beliefs and the sanctioning of violence, among Anabaptists studied, as presented in Table 3. This table shows that of the 55 Anabaptist leaders, only 11 embraced violence, 10 (90.9%) of whom also held apocalyptic beliefs. Compare this data to those who did not embrace violence.[179] Of these 44 individuals, only five (11.4%) held apocalyptic beliefs. Put differently, 10 of the 15 individuals (66.7%) who held apocalyptic beliefs were also violent, while only one of the 40 individuals (2.5%) who did not hold apocalyptic beliefs, was violent. To test whether the relationship between apocalypticism and violence could be due to random chance, a Pearson chi-square test was estimated, which indicated that with a probability of $p < .001$ that it was not. In other words, a strong probability exists that among Anabaptist leaders in the 16th century, apocalyptic beliefs and violent behavior were positively associated with one another.

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[179] The single individual with violent non-apocalyptic beliefs was Balthasar Hubmaier, whose belief in violence is shown in Figure 1. He should not be considered to be violent in the revolutionary sense of the word; rather, he held beliefs that would be more closely associated with real politicism.

Table 3.   The Relationship between Violence and Apocalyptic Belief

Of the 55 Anabaptist leaders:		Violent		Total
		Yes	No	
Apocalyptic	Yes	10 (66.7%) (90.9%)	5 (33.3%) (11.4%)	15 (100.0%) (27.3%)
	No	1 (2.5%) (9.1%)	39 (97.5%) (88.6%)	40 (100.0%) (72.7%)
Total		11 (20%) (100.0%)	44 (80%) (100.0%)	55 (100.0%) (100.0%)

Pearson chi^2 = 28.07, p < .001

C.   CONCLUSION

The social network analysis of the Anabaptist leadership network lends support to the theory that the violence displayed during the Radical Reformation was limited to a particular group of people with a particular set of beliefs associated with the three factors discussed in the beginning of this chapter: charismatic leadership, isolation, and apocalypticism. Although it is difficult to measure charismatic leadership using SNA, the utilization of violence by the Melchiorites, which was not a part of Hofmann's theology, signals that emerging leaders had an enormous impact on the group's behavior. It is also clear from Table 3 that a direct relationship existed between apocalypticism and violence. Additionally, the isolation of the Melchiorite sub-group, which is visible in Figures 10 and 11, shows that this group was isolated from the rest of the Anabaptist leadership network, which firmly placed them in the radical/ultra-radical extreme of society. Undoubtedly, this isolation increased once they controlled the city of Münster. The

combination of these three factors resulted in the utilization of violence by a small portion of the Anabaptist population of Europe.

This chapter has analyzed factors that contribute to religiously motivated violence, as well as provided analysis of the historic case of the Radical Reformation to support this theory. The following chapter discusses how key people, socially located on the periphery of ultra-radical beliefs, were able to turn the Dutch Anabaptists away from violence and accept the polar radical belief of pacifism.

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V.   A CHANGE OF COURSE

The previous chapters discussed the Protestant and Radical Reformations, as well as the major episodes of violence that occurred at the hands of the Anabaptists. Additionally, the chapter presented a theory of contributing factors that led to religious violence, and these factors were used to analyze the historic case of the Anabaptists. This chapter discusses how the violent beliefs held by the Dutch Anabaptist community in the late 1530s were tempered.

Following the Münster Rebellion, Dutch Anabaptism faced a serious identity crisis. The prophecies of Melchior Hofmann, as well as those of the Münsterites regarding the pending return of Christ, had not been realized. A significant portion of the now leaderless Melchiorite Anabaptists in the Netherlands were sympathetic to the Münsterites:

> Although five ships bearing Covenanter were stopped at Haarlem and six others were confiscated in Amsterdam, about thirty ships were able to leave Monnikendam to cross the Zuyder Zee, some three thousand men, women, and children arriving on the east shore with their spears, harquebuses, broadswords, and halberds. Others by land were converging on Hasselt. Both groups were captured and obligated to turn back. Few captives were executed because of the danger of depopulating the country.[180]

In effect, thousands of Dutch sympathizers never completed the journey to Münster and were dispersed amongst the population. Additionally, the events in Münster provided further justification to the authorities (both religious and magisterial) to seek out and destroy the perceived threat that Anabaptism posed.

Under threat, and facing an identity crisis, the Dutch Anabaptists, who had been largely sympathetic to the ideological premise of the Kingdom of Münster (and as indicated by Williams, were willing to come to its military assistance), reinvented themselves. It was largely due to the efforts of Menno Simons whose work would serve as the basis of the religious sect that bears his name (the Mennonites) and continues to

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[180] Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 370.

exist throughout the world today. How this former Catholic priest, who was not involved with Dutch Anabaptism until after the fall of Münster (1535), redirected the movement to apolitical pacifism, is this section's focus. Understanding how this relative newcomer to the radical extreme reshaped the Anabaptist movement and diminished the appeal of the ultra-radical extreme, is of value even today. It offers an example of a religious movement's self-correction away from the violent periphery of society to its more peaceful center, while still maintaining beliefs that would generally be considered extreme.

A.   THE GROUND WORK

After the fall of Münster, northern Germany and the Netherlands had four major Anabaptist groups: the Münsterites (who disintegrated by 1539 after the departure of Heinrich Krechting), the Batenburgers (discussed in Chapter III, Section D3), the Melchiorites (a pacifist group that followed the teachings of Melchior Hofmann), and the Obbenites (led by Obbe Philips, who would leave the movement in 1539).[181] Importantly, Melchior Hofmann was in varying degrees a spiritual origin for all four groups.[182] The previous chapters have discussed the violent leadership that persisted following the fall of Münster. This section discusses the peace-minded post-Münster leaders and their efforts to redirect the movement.

1.   Obbe Philips

The apostles of Jan Matthys (leader of the Münsterites) ordained Obbe Philips; however, he did not adopt the violent practices of the Münsterites, and he eliminated Hofmann's apocalyptic messages from his teachings.[183] Therefore, although Obbe's ministry was largely based on the Melchiorite tradition, he taught it without key elements of Hofmann's teachings (e.g., apocalypticism) and the larger contemporary Münsterite

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[181] Piet Visser, "Mennonites and Doopsgezinden in the Netherlands, 1535–1799," in *A Companion to Anabaptism and Spiritualism, 1521–1700*, ed. John D. Roth and James M. Stayer (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2007), 301–302.

[182] The theology of the Münsterites and Batenburgers clearly went beyond the teachings of Hofmann. However, Hofmann's work clearly influenced Jan Matthys and Jan van Leyden, and therefore effected the beliefs held by the Münsterites and Batenburgers following the fall of the city of Münster.

[183] Visser, "Mennonites and Doopsgezinden in the Netherlands, 1535–1799," 302.

movement (e.g., violence). In fact, Philips was critical of the Münsterites for their usage and embrace of violence. In creating a peaceful non-apocalyptic group, he established a foundation on which Menno Simons would successfully build.[184] He also ordained three important figures before his left the movement in 1539—David Joris, Dirk Philips (Obbe's brother), and Menno Simons—each of whom would have an impact on the restructuring of the Anabaptist movement.

2.　David Joris

David Joris became a temporarily important figure in 1536 following a meeting in Bocholt (near the city of Münster) that attempted to unify the movement, in which he acted as the mediator between a number of Anabaptist groups.[185] The meeting ultimately failed to unify the groups, probably because some of the key players within the region did not attend (Jan van Batenberg and Obbe Philips' followers, in particular).[186] Following the meeting, Joris created his own spiritualistic sect, which became known as the "Davidjorists" that gained popularity.[187] Joris believed that he was the "Third David" (The Jewish King being the first David, Christ being the second), who was to be Christ's prophetic ambassador in the last days.[188]

As James Stayer points out, it is difficult to pin down Joris's position with regards to violence:

> There was a chameleon–like quality about his spiritualizing religion which could accommodate itself to its surroundings almost regardless of where he was or with whom he was speaking. To revolutionary Melchiorites he could say that God and his saints would indeed have their vengeance, but not until the right time foretold in the Scriptures. To peaceful Anabaptists and outsiders he would say with equal sincerity that he had always opposed violence as contrary to the spirit of Christ and the Apostles.[189]

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[184] Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 284.

[185] Ibid., 289–290.

[186] Ibid., 289.

[187] Visser, "Mennonites and Doopsgezinden in the Netherlands, 1535–1799," 302.

[188] Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 298. Joris also argued that the sacraments of the church were of subordinate significance to the institution of the Church.

[189] Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 290.

Joris realized that his teaching could be misinterpreted to justify violence, but in his work, *Onschuldt Davids Jorisz* (1540), he maintained that he intended to convince revolutionary Melchiorites to "lay down the Sword of bloodshed, to place another sword, the Sword of the Spirit in their hands."[190] Joris was non-violent and advocated for Christians to adopt apolitical beliefs. As Stayer notes, Joris's actions built a "path" from revolutionary belief to that of apolitical belief, which is to say, a path away from the practices of violence to nonviolence in support of religious belief.[191]

Due to his beliefs, and the growth in the number of his followers, the authorities targeted Joris and he went into hiding in 1539, from which he continued to direct his movement and produce writings until his death in 1556.[192] Although his teachings had wide-spread appeal and attracted a following, the long-standing value of his efforts was the development of an ideology that transitioned the revolutionary Melchiorites from their violent past to a pacifist future. Joris's flirtation with potentially revolutionary rhetoric was likely necessary to accomplish his mission. In other words, to attract revolutionary believers, Joris had to appeal to their existing beliefs. Although Menno Simons did not like Joris, Joris's work aided in pacifying the Melchiorite believers following the collapse of the "Kingdom of Münster."

3. Dirk Philips

Dirk Philips, the younger brother of Obbe, was baptized by an apostle of Jan Matthys (Peter Houtzagher) in late 1533 or early 1534, and was ordained by Obbe shortly thereafter.[193] Unlike his brother, Dirk did not desert the movement and went on to be an influential force within the early Mennonite community, and a close partner of Menno Simons. Dirk had been a Franciscan friar prior to becoming an Anabaptist, which may explain the level of education displayed in his writings.[194] Visser notes that Dirk was "more theologically skilled than Menno," which, in conjunction with his leadership,

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[190] Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 299.

[191] Ibid.

[192] Visser, "Mennonites and Doopsgezinden in the Netherlands, 1535–1799," 303.

[193] Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 489.

[194] Ibid.

likely benefited the early Mennonite movement.[195] His influence within the Mennonite community increased following Menno Simons resignation as the movement's leader; however, he was never viewed as a central leader of the group.[196] Although Dirk is regarded to some degree as a secondary cast member, his efforts to pacify the Anabaptist movement were long lasting and preceded the work of Menno Simons, beginning under the mentorship of his brother Obbe in 1534, and continuing through the development of the Mennonite sect. He was, in effect, a bridge from the early anti-Münsterite (non-violent) Obbenite Melchiorites to the later followers of Menno Simons. Although it is difficult to quantify his efforts, they were likely crucial in Menno's success.[197]

4.   Menno Simons

Menno Simons was somewhat slow to join the Anabaptist movement. By his own acknowledgement, he was unaware of Anabaptism until he heard of the execution of Sicke Freerks Snijder in 1531, which had a profound effect on the then Roman Catholic priest.[198] Menno had, since 1525, wrestled with aspects of his faith, in particular with the doctrine of transubstantiation.[199] Menno committed himself to increasing his knowledge of the New Testament and was inspired to some degree by the writings of Martin Luther.[200] Although he sympathized with the Anabaptists, and was accepting more of a Sacramentist[201] position, Simons remained in the priesthood until 1536.[202] Two major events contributed to him leaving the Roman Catholic Church. The first was what transpired in Münster, and the second was the violent takeover of the Old Cloister.[203]

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[195] Visser, *Mennonites and Doopsgezinden in the Netherlands, 1535–1799*, 303.

[196] Ibid., 311.

[197] Dirk Philips was certainly the theological force behind Menno. However, the author is speaking about the effect that his presence had on drawing people to Menno Simons.

[198] Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 387.

[199] Ibid., 388.

[200] Ibid.

[201] Sacramentists did not believe that the host in the Mass was the real body and blood of Christ.

[202] Cornelius. *Dutch Anabaptism: Origin, Spread, Life and Thought*, 152.

[203] It is possible that Peter Simons, who was killed in the attack on the Old Cloister, was in fact Menno's brother. It could be an additional motivation for speaking out so heavily against the Revolutionary Anabaptists.

Simons began writing and preaching about the errors of the Münsterite cause, most notably in his 1535 pamphlet *On the Blasphemy of Jan van Leyden*, which Simon wrote while he was still a priest. Just as the city of Münster was falling in early 1536, he severed ties with the Roman Catholic Church. His timing was a bit unusual. As Williams points out, "… he made the break at precisely that moment when revolutionary Anabaptism was most hated by the authorities and most discredited by its devotees."[204] However, writing about his decision to leave the priesthood, he said: "After this had transpired [the events of Münster and the attack of the Old Cloister], the blood of these people, although misled, fell so hot on my heart that I could not stand it, nor find rest in my soul."[205] Menno was motivated to become an Anabaptist, not only because of the theology of the movement, but also by the "misguided" violent sects, which he felt were in need of a shepherd.

In 1536, Simons was re-baptized by Obbe Philips, who also ordained him in 1537.[206] Although ordained, it was not until 1539 or 1540, following the publication of *Foundation of Christian Doctrine* (also referred to as the *Fundament)*, that Simons emerged as a leader in the Anabaptist movement. Almost certainly a major factor in his accession to leadership was that Batenburg, Obbe Philips, David Joris, and Krechting, all powerful sect leaders after the fall of Münster, had all vanished from the scene by 1539.[207] In particular, Obbe Philips's abandonment of the movement in 1539 left a void in the Obbenite (peaceful Melchiorite) sect that Dirk Philips and Menno Simons would fill.

a.   *Menno and Violence*

Simons was most assuredly a pacifist, whose writing on the topic was, in many ways, a response to the violence of the Münsterites. Although a pacifist, his opinion on state violence may be initially surprising. It is clear that his early work was in line with

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[204] Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 391.

[205] Ibid.

[206] Ibid., 392–393.

[207] Visser, *Mennonites and Doopsgezinden in the Netherlands, 1535–1799*, 303.

the traditional Melchiorite beliefs on the use of punishment and that Christian leaders were permitted to punish wickedness.[208] Late in his career, however, his teachings adopted a more radical position on state coercion, which effectively denounced capital punishment.[209] James Stayer discusses how the differences between the 1539 and 1558 versions of Simons's work, *Foundation of Christian Doctrine*, reflect the evolution of Simons's thought on the subject.

> Where in 1539 he had instructed rulers to "punish the wicked and rightly wield the Sword that God has given you," in the revision the reading was "punish the wicked in a Christian manner and rightly serve in the offices that God has given you." Where in the earlier *Fundament* he had simply told rulers that they were called to punish specified kinds of criminals, in 1558 he added the qualifying phrase, that the punishment must be "with complete fairness and in Christian modesty," and also a marginal gloss, 'It is unfitting for Christian princes to be bloodthirsty.'[210]

From the beginning, Simons's work was in response to the events that occurred in Münster. His position on the usage of violence was important not only to distinguish his sect from the recent violent Anabaptist history within the region, but also to help redefine the identity of the Mennonite Anabaptists in a post-Münster world.

b.   *Explanation of Menno's Success*

Menno Simons' early success was largely impacted by three factors: The gap in Melchiorite leadership, his work *Foundation of Christian Doctrine*, and his proximity within the social space to the radical elements of the Dutch Anabaptists' movement.

c.   *Gap in Melchiorite Leadership*

As previously discussed, by 1539, the leaders of the four factions of the splintered Melchiorite movement had largely disappeared.[211] At this point in time, Menno Simons

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[208] Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 313.

[209] Ibid., 314.

[210] Ibid., 318.

[211] Visser, *Mennonites and Doopsgezinden in the Netherlands, 1535–1799*, 303.

emerged as a prominent and influential leader within the Melchiorite community.[212] The following table (Table 4) shows the status of the Melchiorite leadership in 1539. What is interesting is that of the 13 leaders listed, only two (Dirk Philips and Menno Simons) are still active Anabaptists within the tradition of the works of Melchior Hofmann. Assuredly, this gap in Melchiorite leadership assisted Simons in reestablishing the principles of the initial movement and eventually to become the leader of the Mennonites.

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[212] Menno had been an active leader starting in 1537; however, his position increased in 1539 to a much more prominent role.

Table 4.   Melchiorite Leadership in 1539[213]

Melchiorite Leader's Status in 1539			
Name	**Group Affiliation**	**Position on Violence**	**Status**
Appleman, Cornelis	Batenburger	V	Alive, viewed as a bandit
Hofmann, Melchior	Melichiorite	NV	Inprisoned, discredited
Joris, David	Melichiorite / Obbenitie / Davidjorist	NV	Alive, living in hiding with a fake name
Knipperdolling, Bernard	Münsterite	V	Executed
Kretching, Heinrich	Münsterite / Reformed	V	Alive, follows the reformed tradition starting in the early 1540's.
Matthys, Jan	Münsterite	V	Killed in Battle
Philips, Dirk	Melichiorite / Obbenitie / Mennonite	NV	Alive
Philips, Obbe	Melichiorite / Obbenitie	NV	Alive; however, deserted his faith
Rothmann, Bernard	Münsterite	V	Thought to have died in the seige of Münster
Simons, Menno	Melichiorite / Obbenitie / Mennonite	NV	Alive
Van Batenburg, Jan	Batenburger	V	Executed
Van Campen, Jacob	Melichiorite	NV	Executed
Van Layden, Jan	Münsterite	V	Executed

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[213] Assuredly, the Melichorite movement had other leaders than the 13 listed. However, these leaders appear most prominently within scholarly writing about the period, which arguably makes them the most important. Admittedly, several of the Münsterite leaders shown were of less regional importance than the likes of van Layden and Matthys. However, they are displayed to show that the leadership of the Münsterite movement was largely decimated by 1539.

d.   *Foundation of Christian Doctrine*

Simons's work, *Foundation of Christian Doctrine*, released in 1539, was a pivotal event in reshaping Dutch Anabaptism. As Krahn observes, "In simple language Menno Simons presented basic doctrine and ethical standards based on the New Testament to a bewildered, seeking group of covenanters, who found in these writings the guide they needed and were looking for."[214] This book attempted to unify the Obbenites, Melchiorites, and Münsterites on a common pacifist understanding of Christianity.[215] Additionally, Simons's focus on the New Testament, which centered everything on Christ, departed from the Old Testament emphasis that dominated the beliefs held by van Layden and the Münsterites. The *Foundation of Christian Doctrine* was also intended as a message to the authorities in an effort to separate Anabaptism from the violence of the Münsterites and Batenburgers.[216] Simons's solid theological doctrine was introduced at a critical and confusing time and was one of the reasons he developed a large following.

e.   *Menno Simons's Social Proximity*

Simons's social position also contributed to his ability to affect the Anabaptist movement. As Sean Everton notes, "an actor's position in the social structure (i.e., its structural location) impacts its beliefs, norms, and observed behavior."[217] In other words, people tend to behave and share beliefs with those with whom they are structurally close. Everton also notes in his section entitled "Assumptions" that an individual's location within social structure can enormously affect that individual's behavior.[218]

As Chapter IV highlighted, the Dutch Anabaptists were relatively isolated and disconnected from the overall network of leaders. Figure 12 takes a closer, isolated, look at the Dutch Anabaptists. As might be assumed, the non-violent leadership can be seen in a distinct cluster (Obbe Philips, Dirk Philips, David Joris, and Menno Simons circled in

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[214] Krahn, *Dutch Anabaptism: Origin, Spread, Life and Thought*, 173.

[215] Ibid.

[216] Visser, *Mennonites and Doopsgezinden in the Netherlands, 1535–1799*, 305.

[217] Everton, *Disrupting Dark Networks*, 39.

[218] Ibid., 49.

blue). Importantly, Melchior Hofmann was the spiritual foundation for the majority of the leaders listed. This fact is critical in that although ideological clusters existed within the Melchiorites, everyone was influenced by a set of shared theological beliefs.[219] Thus, although Simons's ministry was, in part, a reaction to the violence of the Münsterites, these common beliefs aided his efforts in 1539. His position within the overall social structure was only two steps removed from the ultra-radical Melchiorites. Although significant differences occurred with regards to theology, the groups did find common ground.[220] Additionally, Menno's structural position within the overall Melchiorite community was strengthened by the departure (either through death, defection, or hiding) of other group leaders.

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[219] Due to the independent developments within Münster prior to the intervention of Matthys, it is problematic to say that all Dutch Anabaptists were initially influenced by Hofmann's ideology. However, Hofmann was clearly influential within the Münsterite theology following the beginning of adult baptism within the city. As discussed in the second section of this article, the advent of adult baptism in Münster was due to the intervention of Matthys and his followers. It was only after this intervention that the apocalyptic and prophetic influence of Hofmann can really be observed in Münster.

[220] Joris attempted to leverage this common ground at the meeting at Bocholt. Although this meeting failed, Joris was able to get meeting participants to agree on several issues.
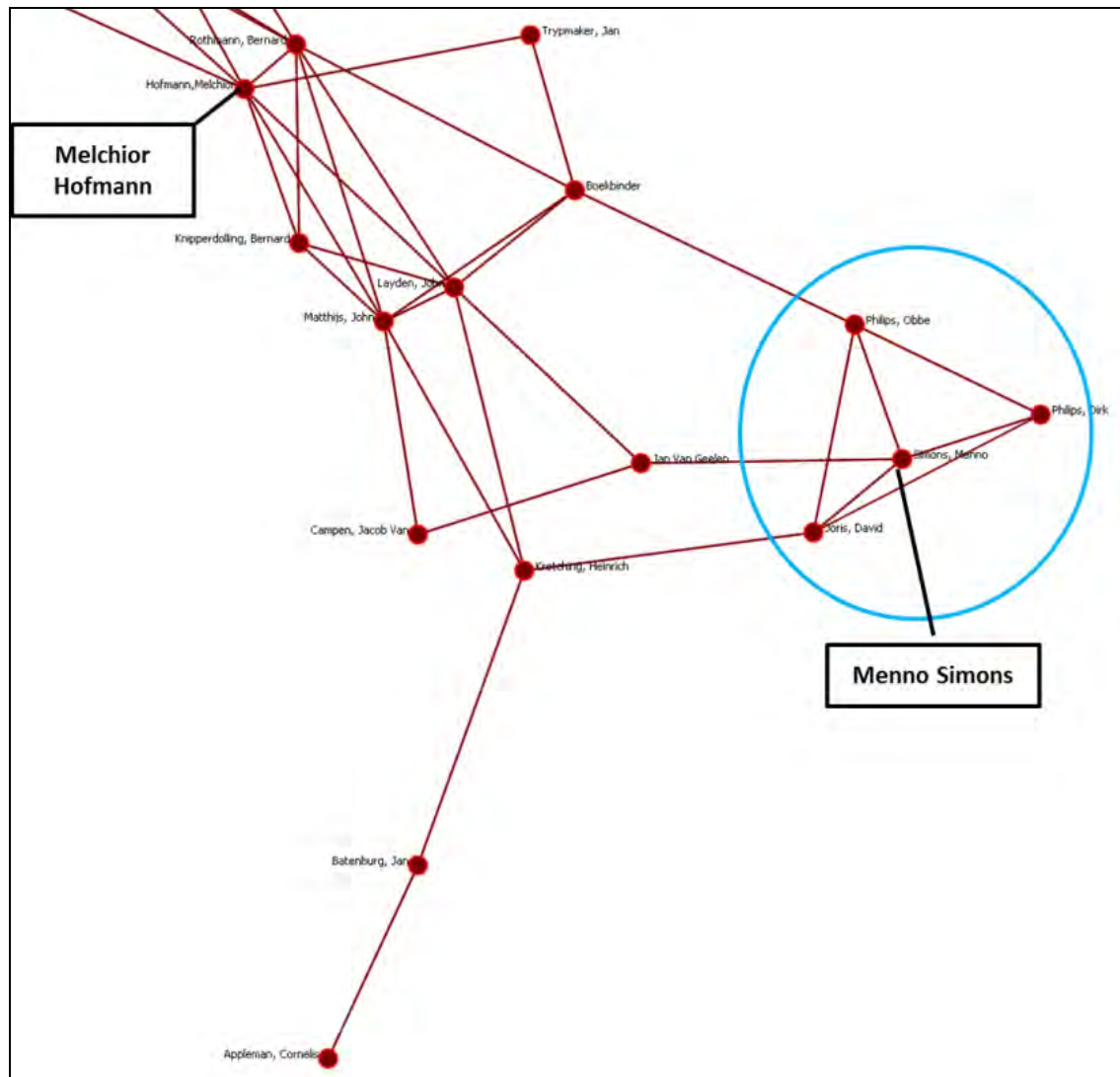
Figure 12.   The Dutch Anabaptists[221]

Simons was without permanent residence between 1536 and 1544 and under constant threat of arrest after a warrant was issued in 1541.[222] Thus, he constantly moved throughout the region, preaching and publishing pamphlets on his beliefs, exposing his ideology everywhere he went. He was, therefore, able not only to provide a narrative of the Anabaptist movement but also to establish congregations and baptize believers as he

[221] After Matthews et al., "Cultural Inheritance or Cultural Diffusion of Religious Violence? A Quantitative Case Study of the Radical Reformation."

[222] Krahn, *Dutch Anabaptism: Origin, Spread, Life and Thought*, 175.

evaded the authorities. These actions improved his structural position and helped to make him relevant.

B.   SUMMARY

The foundation for Menno Simons's success started with the work of the Philips Brothers and the peaceful Melchiorites who did not embrace the violence of the Münsterites. Simons' publication of the *Foundation of Christian Doctrine,* came at a critical time to provide a guideline for how he viewed Christianity, which resonated with a population of confused, persecuted, and splintered Dutch Anabaptists. Simons' prominence within Dutch Anabaptism increased as the pool of leaders was depleted in the late 1530s (see Table 4). Additionally Simons's structural position placed him near to the Melchiorite community, which allowed him to access and leverage common beliefs to further his cause. Along with constantly being on the move, it allowed him to expose his beliefs to many people. This is not to say that he transformed violent Münsterites into pacifists. Rather, it is to argue that his efforts helped to transform a population at one time willing to support violent religious leaders, into one that would became radically apolitical within a relatively short period of time following the fall of the Kingdom of Münster.

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VI.   CONCLUSION

This thesis has attempted to answer the research question, "During the Radical Reformation, why did some Anabaptist groups accept the use of violence while others did not, and how did the overall movement evolve to pacifism?" It has argued that violent ideology is largely a function of three factors: charismatic leadership, isolation (social and/or geographic), and apocalypticism. The interaction of these factors led to the emergence of Anabaptist groups that embrace the use of violence. However, the internal characteristics of groups can also lead them to change direction and move away from violence. In particular, in the case of the Anabaptists social proximity can assist leaders with a counter-message to speak effectively to violent ultra-radical factions.

A.   RESULTS OF ANALYSIS

The Anabaptist data presented in Chapter IV supports the theory that charismatic leadership, isolation, and apocalypticism were key factors in the emergence of violence. Charismatic leadership almost certainly played a large role in the behavior and beliefs of Dutch Anabaptists. The divine connection that leaders were perceived to have had, inspired thousands of people to migrate to Münster to await Christ's imminent return. The SNA analysis demonstrated that the Münsterite leadership was, in fact, located on the periphery and isolated from the majority of their Anabaptist contemporaries, a group already somewhat isolated from society. Finally, the analysis showed that of the 55 Anabaptists within the network, only 11 embraced violence, and of these 11, 10 (90.9%) held apocalyptic beliefs. A Pearson chi-square test established that it was highly probable that 16th century Anabaptist apocalyptic beliefs and violent behavior were positively associated with one another.

Chapter V discussed the social position of non-violent leaders, in particular Menno Simons, who played an instrumental role in transforming the violent inclinations of the Dutch Anabaptists. Due to Simons's social proximity to the leaders of violent groups, he was in a position to impact the susceptible population, those who were at one time willing to support violent Anabaptist beliefs. The message and approach of Obbe

Philips, Dirk Philips, and Menno Simons lacked self-proclaimed prophecy, which eliminated the type of charismatic qualities that leaders, such as Hofmann and Matthys, possessed. Additionally, these leaders removed the apocalyptic imagery used by the early Melchiorites and placed a greater emphasis on the pacifism found in the New Testament. These differences were critical in the successful development of the Mennonite church, which still exists peacefully today.

B.   RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings from this research suggest that the combination of charismatic leadership, isolation, and apocalypticism increase the likelihood that religious groups will become violent. Once isolated, the ability to affect groups is limited because of the lack of external ties and information. Therefore, efforts should be made to limit the potential for isolation. For example, Grim and Finke have shown that increased levels of religious freedom are positively associated with lower levels of religious isolation and violence.[223] However, if a group exhibits these characteristics, interaction with the group should be conducted cautiously because it is unknown how it will be interpreted or manipulated by the group. All interactions should be carefully planned and coordinated so as not to trigger a violent response accidentally, or so that unnecessary tensions are not created or reinforced. In the case of the Münster Rebellion, interaction with the Price-Bishop further isolated the Münsterites and reinforced their beliefs, which led to elevated tensions. and ultimately, to violence.

The case of the Dutch Anabaptists provides valuable insight into how violent religious groups can shift away from violence. It shows that radical extremist leaders have the potential to affect those who are even more radical. It is due to shared beliefs and social proximity, and suggests that by amplifying specific voices from within the radical extreme, a possibility exists that support for the ultra-radical extreme can be

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[223] Grim and Finke, *The Price of Freedom Denied: Religious Persecution and Conflict in the Twenty-First Century*, 212–213.

tempered.[224] Thus, efforts should be made to identify the Menno Simons' of the world; those who are socially proximate to the ultra-radical extreme and have a message, which, while still extreme, is counter to the message propagated by the ultra-radicals. Some may find this recommendation uncomfortable. However, it is likely to be more effective than seeking out moderate voices due not only to the moderates lack of social proximity to the ultra-extreme, but also because the two groups' shared beliefs are minimal.

C.   FINAL REMARKS

Religiously motivated violence has been and will always be a topic of relevance. To address and effectively counter contemporary violent groups, it is important to investigate similar historic events. The case of the 16th century Anabaptists provides a wealth of information on how these groups became violent, and how they can be self-corrected within a relatively short period of time. Armed with this historic insight, better decisions can be made with regard to interacting with and countering current violent religious groups.

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[224] Amplification could be overt or covert. The methods used to amplify a specific message need to be chosen based on the particular group that has been identified. It is likely, however, that overt support for a leader in the radical extreme may, in fact, negatively alter the social position of that leader. In other words, the known existence of a relationship between the leader and a state may weaken the legitimacy and support for that leader.

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